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Quarterly Series.

THIRTEENTH VOLUME.

THE STORY OF
ST. STANISLAUS KOSTKA.

ROEHAMPTON:

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THE STORY OF

ST. STANISLAUS KOSTKA.

EDITE BY

HENRY JAMES COLERIDGE,

OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

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1875.

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PREFACE.

THE present volume, as originally announced, was intended to be a simple translation of the *Life of St. Stanislaus* lately published in Italy by Father Boero. The distinctive feature of that Life, as compared with many other very excellent works on the same subject, is that it frequently embodies the words of the witnesses who were examined in the several Processes instituted by authority to collect evidence as to the virtues and actions of the Saint. Father Boero tells us in his Preface that he was led to write a new Life, after making himself familiar with the evidence of the Processes, partly in order to vindicate the character—most unjustly assailed—of the celebrated writer, Bartoli, whose statements he had uniformly found to be most accurate, and supported by the highest possible evidence, that of the

witnesses in the Processes, and partly to give to persons devout to the Saint a narrative of the facts of his life, as far as might be, in the words of these witnesses themselves.

Although the Italian Life by Father Boero completely fulfils the object for which it was written, and is in itself a very beautiful work, I still hope that the English reader will not be ungrateful to me for having changed the original plan of this volume—at the cost of a little delay—and for giving him an original narrative instead of a translation. Nothing that is of importance to ordinary readers has been omitted, though I have passed over the chapter about the discovery of the room in which St. Stanislaus died, that about the history of his relics, and that on the thirteen miracles presented for examination in the Process of his canonization, three of which were selected as sufficient by the Sacred Congregation. The object of the volume now published is to give a simple narrative of facts, such as may be welcome both to young and old, without endeavouring, as has sometimes been admirably done in

works on the lives of Saints, to draw out the religious and moral reflections which suggest themselves to pious or contemplative minds in connection with such subjects. I may add that, as far as the mere facts of the history are concerned, there is little new, as it seems, to be stated about St. Stanislaus, who has been made the subject of more than one careful biography in French and English, the authors of which have spared no pains to make them complete.

H. J. C.

Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph,
April 18, 1875.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER XII.

The Glorification of St. Stanislaus.

CHAPTER I.

The meeting of two Saints.

THE Church of God, which is the garden of the Heavenly King, has its flowers of every kind and hue, both on earth and in heaven, the variety and the contrast of which enhance its beauty and the glory of its Lord. He Himself, in His earthly sojourn, chose to pass through every stage of human life from infancy up to mature manhood, and to be in each such stage the Example of His followers and the Source of their strength and grace. If there is something specially attractive and winning about the Holy Infancy and Youth, it may be said also that their attractiveness and charm have been very abundantly reflected in the life of the Church, which has sent far more children than adults to heaven, and has been guided by the Holy Ghost, in her selection even of saints for canonization, to enthrone many of the most tender age upon her altars. The Holy Innocents were the first to give their blood for our Lord, and amid the white-robed army of martyrs

who have followed in their train there have been crowds of holy children, who have been old enough deliberately to choose death rather than deny the faith or the law of their God. As if to show how precious in the sight of our Lord is the imitation of the virtues of His Youth on the part of the faithful, it has been arranged by Providence that many striplings and young maidens have been pre-eminent for sanctity, adorned by great spiritual favours and blessings during their short life, and glorified by miracles after their death. In many others the perfect beauty of their mature sanctity has grown like a mighty tree out of the tender shoot of their youthful innocence, which has become less conspicuous because it has been but the beginning of a career along that path of the just which, 'as a shining light, goeth forwards and increaseth even to perfect day.'[1] Thus for youthful saints, the special growth in the Church of the seed sown by the Youthful Life of our Lord, we are led naturally to look rather to those whose career has been cut short, but in whose case, as the Church sings in her collect for the feast of St. Stanislaus, God, amidst the other miracles of His wisdom, has granted even in tender age the grace of mature sanctity.

We have now named the holy child and youth

[1] Prov. iv. 18.

to whose short course on earth the following pages are to be devoted, and we find in him, as has already been hinted, that particular beauty of contrasted and multiform grace which is one of the ornaments of the Church. It is strange to find so ripe a soul in so young a body, so perfect an appreciation of the eternal truths in a mind so fresh to the seductions and dangers of time. It is wonderful to find so fair a gleam of childish beauty amid the first generation of a religious order, the first members of which were all mature and well-formed men, men of learning and study and experience, who united themselves in the 'Compañia' which afterwards became so famous for the purpose of putting at the disposal of the militant Church a body of trained warriors who might be turned to account in a thousand different needs. But very early in the history of the Society it discovered its special vocation for the instruction and education of youth—a vocation which, more perhaps than anything else, has made it the object of jealousy, persecution, and calumny, and the hatred of all the enemies of the Church. And if it was to devote itself in a special manner to the young, it was only natural that as years went on it should number among its children a choir of youthful saints, a part of whose particular office it might be to bear witness to the virtues of Christian youth, the virtues practised by

our Lord in the holy house of Nazareth, as well as to that special lesson of the obligation and constraining force of a high vocation manifested in early years, which is embodied in that single mystery of His Life which breaks the even tenour of the thirty years, when our Lord left our Lady and St. Joseph without a word of warning, in order that He might be about His Father's business.

St. Stanislaus Kostka leads the band of these youthful flowers of the Society, some of whom have been beatified or canonized, while the memory of others has remained fragrant within the body itself, though unknown to the Church at large.[2] In one

[2] He was contemporary in his noviceship with the very holy Portuguese youth, Francis Andrada, whose memory long survived as that of a novice of extreme perfection. He died a few months after St. Stanislaus (Feb. 16, 1569), having entered the Society in December, 1566. Like St. Stanislaus, he was far advanced in sanctity before he became a religious, his characteristic grace being fervour and zeal for souls. "Long before his entrance into his noviceship, from the age of ten or twelve years, the young Francis de Andrada had given proof of a zeal and a fervour which rose superior to the weakness of tender years. If he heard that a poor sick man was in his agony, he went to him immediately, taking a crucifix and two tapers, and placing them near the dying man, he often stayed with him for many hours to encourage him and pray with him. It was a sight so charming and edifying, say the authors of his life, that throughout the whole neighbourhood those who were dangerously ill rivalled each other in calling for the holy child, as the priests themselves named him, who urged their penitents to have him sent for. Francis de Andrada became a novice at the age of fourteen, and in less than three years spent in religious life, succeeded in raising upon solid foundations the edifice of an incomparable sanctity. At all places and at all times he represented to

particular, indeed, he went before all the other saints of the Society, even before St. Ignatius and St. Francis Xavier, in that he was the first to receive from the authority of the Supreme Pontiff the title of 'Blessed.' The generation of the Society to which he belonged has been called the heroic time of the Order, and in consequence of this fact we find his life interlacing itself, as it were, with the careers of other eminent saints. It was the Blessed Peter Canisius, the spiritual child of the Blessed Peter Favre, who sent him to

himself our Lord and His most holy Mother as standing by him, the first on the right hand and the latter on the left, and he strove to regulate, according to these most holy models, his deportment, his words, his conduct, all his thoughts, and the most transient movements of his heart. . . . Thanks to his unceasing solicitude to please God, he never had to be admonished twice of a fault, however small. Was it not enough, he used to repeat, that the Lord had sent him word to correct himself? Every hour he offered to the Eternal Father one of the sorrowful mysteries of His Divine Son; and he likewise invited all creatures, after the example of the Three Children in the Babylonian furnace, to bless the Lord for the graces with which He had replenished the most holy Virgin, in order to make her the Queen of Heaven. . . . He had also a longing, truly insatiable, to crucify his body, and to imprint on it the marks of the Passion—an openness of heart so perfect that the Master of Novices was wont to say, 'The soul of Brother Francis is as transparent to my eyes as the clearest crystal in the rays of the sun'—a conformity to the will of God so wonderful that in the space of a full year he did not remember to have passed a single quarter of an hour in the day without renewing it. And yet upon his death-bed, when he was asked repeatedly what recollection of his religious life gave him the greatest joy and confidence in the mercy of God—'After the merits of my Saviour,' he replied, 'my sweetest consolation is to have loved, above all, obedience' (*Menology of the Society*, Feb. 16). Francis Andrada was at Coimbra during the short religious life of St. Stanislaus.

Rome, and, as we shall see, it was a spiritual child, in another sense, of the same first companion of St. Ignatius, who received him on his arrival. For the readers of the Life of Blessed Peter Favre will remember the influence which he exercised upon the determination of St. Francis Borgia, then Duke of Gandia, to leave the world, and the marvellous manner in which the great Spanish nobleman seemed to step into the place of the simple Savoyard peasant when Peter died in the dog-days at Rome, from having travelled thither under obedience at that unhealthy time. The Life of St. Francis Borgia may, we hope, some day form a part of the same series to which that of Blessed Peter and the present volume on St. Stanislaus belong. Meantime we must content ourselves with pointing out the contrast between the two saintly figures and characters with whose meeting our story may fitly open—alike, indeed, in noble birth and lofty sanctity, and in their devotion to the Society, but surely singularly different in almost all other respects.

It was on the 25th of October, 1567, that St. Stanislaus, then a mere youth, entered the Flaminian Gate.[3] The guards would let him pass without inquiry, for he had two companions who

[3] The gate on the ordinary highroad from Germany, by the March of Ancona, Ferrara, and Lombardy.

wore the cloak and cassock even then well known as the habit of the new Society of Jesus. Of these two, the one was a man of forty years, the other a youth somewhat older than their companion. All were travel-stained and way-worn, and bore on their faces the evident marks of delicate health and great fatigue. But the youngest of the party, spite of his beaming countenance and joyful looks, could hardly bear up against his fatigue, as they went down the long street of the Corso, under the Arco dei Portogalli, as the Arch of Domitian was then called.[4] Perhaps one of them, whose look betrayed his southern birth, had been to Rome before. At all events, he could seek direction from the passers-by to the Church of Santa Maria della Strada, to which they were bound. So turning to the right at the end of the long street, the wonder of Europe, and passing beneath the frowning battlements of the Venetian Palace, then the summer palace of the Popes,[5] they came to a small piazza in the very heart of the city, into which four great arteries ran.[6] A clearance of buildings was being made for the new church, which was so soon to rise with the

[4] So Schott, in his *Itinerarium Italicum*, calls it. Hubner names it the Arch of Marcus Aurelius. It has since been destroyed. Hubner, *Sixte Quint.* pars vi. c. 2.

[5] P. de Buck, *Gesù di Roma*, p. 23.

[6] *Hist. S.J.* pars iv. 142.

name of the Gesù. Mediæval palaces of the Astalli, the Altieri, and Frangipani formed the irregular square.[7] A street but lately opened ran straight up to the foot of the 'cordonata,' which was crowned by the new palace of the Capitol. At its entrance to the left was the church of which the travellers were in search. Simple in its first design, it had undergone many changes, and was much enlarged since it had been obtained by Father Codacio, the first Italian who joined the Society, for the use of St. Ignatius and his companions. To the right of Santa Maria della Strada was the low long house, the home of the founder, the place of his death.

The three halted at the door and sent in their credentials. They were the letter of a saint to a saint, and it will tell us who the bearers were.

'*To the Very Reverend Father General, Master Francis Borgia.*

'The bearers of this letter are, by the Divine Providence, sent from this our Province. The first is James, the Genoese, who is well known to your Paternity, and whom you ordered to be sent back to Rome, as he wished himself, in order to continue his studies with greater convenience. He has lived in two of our Colleges, conducting himself as

[7] *Hist. S.J.* pars i. c. ix. n. 4.

a good and obedient religious ought. I hope that he will enjoy better health in the climate of Italy. The second is Master Reyner, of Liége, who has taught rhetoric for many years, with great reputation, in the College at Munich, besides lecturing on the principles of dialectics. The Father Visitor[8] has pronounced him ready to go through his philosophical course at Rome, before he begins to study theology. He is of a gentle disposition, and persevering in his vocation, whilst his candour and simplicity of soul are such as to win for him the goodwill and affection of everybody. The only thing I am afraid of is that his health may suffer if he stays too long in the Roman climate. The third whom I send is Stanislaus, a Pole, and a noble, virtuous, and studious youth, whom our fathers at Vienna were afraid of receiving among their novices on account of the opposition of his family. He came to me with the intention of accomplishing his long-cherished desires (for he had dedicated himself by an interior vow to the Society some years before), and, to prove him, I placed him in the college of convictors, where he was diligent in every sort of office and constant in

[8] St. Francis Borgia in the previous year, while restoring Blessed Canisius to his position as Provincial, which he had been forced at the bidding of Pius IV. to leave in 1566 in order to bear his orders to the German Bishops, had sent Father Jerome Nadal with full powers as Visitor to all the Northern Provinces of the Society.

his vocation. He wished, all that time, to be sent to Rome, in order to be at a greater distance from his family, whose persecution he dreads, and to make more progress in piety. He has not yet lived with our novices, but he is ready to be admitted among them in Rome, to complete his term of probation. I look for great things from him. I hope that your Paternity will not object to his going to Rome without being summoned thither, not only because so good an opportunity of sending him has offered itself, but because he most ardently desired to go, not having been fully accepted by me.

'PETER CANISIUS, S.J.

'From Munich, Sept. 25, 1567.'[9]

Already the post had brought a letter from Ingolstadt from Blessed Canisius, then Provincial of Upper Germany, to the saintly General, dated the 18th of September. He wrote—

'I have received the letter of your Paternity, dated August the 23rd, in which you desire me to send our brother, James Levanzio, the Genoese. He will very soon be with you, together with Master Fabricius Reyner, and, most likely, Stanislaus, a very good young Polish noble, who is anxious to embrace

[9] *Vide* Boero, pp. 83—85.

our rule of life, even though his relations are against his doing so.'[10]

St. Ignatius had laid it down as a law that every child of the Society should receive a hearty welcome on his arrival at any of its houses. No such law was required for a heart like that of St. Francis Borgia to force him to show all kindness to any children of his, who came at the voice of obedience from distant lands. He knew already, by a long letter from Father Wolfgang of Vienna,[11] the history of Stanislaus Kostka, but the words of such a man as Peter Canisius, 'I expect great things of him,' would have been enough to make him take a more than ordinary interest in the young Polish gentleman, coming as he did to offer himself as a novice. So that, though we read of it in no early record of the Saint,[12] we cannot doubt that he was introduced to the Father General, and received from him the customary embrace.

[10] Blessed Canisius wrote again on the 4th of October, 1567, from Augsburg—*vide* Boero. 'During the past week I have sent to Rome our very dear brothers James the Genoese and Master Reyner of Liége, Professor of Rhetoric, and Stanislaus a Pole, a good youth of gentle blood.'

[11] *Vide infra*, p. 65.

[12] Patrignani in his *Menologio*, 1730, and D'Orleans in his Life, which bears evidence of being coloured in the manner of his time, 1727, state the fact, and P. d'Orleans puts a speech into the mouth of St. Francis Borgia.

St. Francis was growing old, but austerities rather than years had changed the handsome and burly Duke of Gandia into that thin and wasted form, so simple, so lowly, and so gentle which met St. Stanislaus' reverent gaze. And we cannot be surprized if the youth felt a real reverence towards one who was known throughout Catholic Europe by his 'great refusal,' by his rejection of a most splendid position and princely wealth for love of Christ. The name which he bore required to be purified. Neither the splendid alliances which had made his family second to none in Europe, nor even the royal blood which through his grandfather and again through his mother flowed in the veins of Francis Borgia[13] could have purified it, or raised it from disgrace. The virtue of the humble Saint has given it a true lustre, has transfigured it. The story of his conversion, if conversion there could have been in a stainless life, a change wrought by the sight of the corpse of his royal mistress, the great Queen Isabella, is too well known to need repetition. This first impression was deepened by the words and instructions of Blessed Peter Favre, whom he first met in 1542. But this has been well

[13] Connected with the D'Este, the D'Albrets, &c. St. Francis' grandmother on the father's side was descended from Ferdinand I. of Castile, while his mother was the grandchild of Ferdinand II.

recorded elsewhere.[14] One of the last works of that saintly man was to give the Duke, then staying at Gandia, the Exercises of St. Ignatius, during which Francis finally determined to enter the Society, and thus supply the loss that it sustained in Blessed Peter's death. The very sacrifice of all that the world esteems made the young Stanislaus feel a special sympathy with the holy General, for there was a point of resemblance between the old man and the young, which the story of Stanislaus' life will bring out into clear light. Nor were the companions of his journey, we may be sure, forgotten in this welcome, before they left the house to go to the Roman College, the destination of both, a strange building as it stood before the generosity of Gregory XIII. had carried to completion what St. Francis Borgia had begun.

And now we must go back in time, and go far off in place, to tell the history of the young man who came to add another light to the glorious galaxy of holiness that then was gathered within the walls of Rome, when St. Pius V. was upon the throne, St. Philip Neri, with Baronius and Tarugi, at St. Girolamo, and Blessed John Leonardi one of the many who were attaining perfection under his guidance, and St. Felix of Cantalice at the Capuchins.

[14] *Life of Blessed Peter Favre* (Quarterly Series) pp. 80, 161.

CHAPTER II.

Birth and early years of Stanislaus Kostka.

THE day of the birth of St. Stanislaus is not known, but it took place towards the end of September, 1550, at Kostkov, the estate of his family, in the duchy of Masovia. His father, John Kostka, was of senatorial dignity, and his mother, Margaret Kriska, was the sister and niece of two palatines of the kingdom of Poland, and aunt of the celebrated chancellor, Felix Kriski. Both families were of the high nobility, and in a country where the monarchy was elective, as was the case in Poland, the position of the nobility was more dignified and important than elsewhere. Their King was chosen from their ranks, and they were his electors; he was a sovereign, indeed, but a sovereign in a commonwealth; the head of a body consisting of the Senate, who discussed and regulated with him the affairs of government. We hear of a long succession of palatines, chancellors, ambassadors, and the like, belonging to the house of Kostka; and when, on the death of Charles IX., his brother, Henry of

Anjou, laid down the crown of Poland to assume that of France, and Stephen Bathory of Transylvania was elected his successor, a considerable number of votes were given in favour of John Kostka, a near relative of our Saint.

His mother's family was a branch of the illustrious house of Odrowaz, which gave to the Church and the Dominican Order the great St. Hyacinth. The Kostkas and the Kriskas were both staunch and faithful children of the Church; and it was the boast of the former that they had never, within the memory of man, been infected by the slightest taint of heresy or schism, notwithstanding the rapid spread of Lutheranism in Poland, as in other parts of northern Europe. We learn, from the evidence of many witnesses in the process of canonization of St. Stanislaus, that this loyalty to the Faith was a characteristic of the whole of the duchy of Masovia, in which was situated the estate of the Kostka family; so much so, that no heretics were to be found there as inhabitants, and those who were merely passing through it did so more as fugitives than travellers.

Stanislaus is described by some writers as the youngest son of his parents, but it is certain that he was the second of their five children, as there is in existence an original letter of his brother Paul,[1]

[1] The letter is cited in a subsequent chapter.

in which he speaks of a brother and a sister who were younger than himself and Stanislaus. And it is surely worthy of remark that the male succession of the house of Kostka failed, and that its name would have been a forgotten thing but for the holy life and blessed death of the saintly youth who bore it, and who is its greatest glory.

It pleased God to herald the birth of Stanislaus, as of so many other saints, by a miraculous and prophetic sign, the full meaning of which was not to be seen till later, but which filled the minds of those to whom it was known with a wonderful feeling of expectation and reverence for the unborn child already marked by the hand of God with a token of His especial predilection. Some months before his birth Margaret saw before her, in a dream, the most holy Name of Jesus, traced in letters of glowing crimson, and surrounded by rays of glory. A few days later, the same Name encircled by the same sort of aureole suddenly appeared upon her bosom. At first, as it often happens with regard to signal and exceptional divine favours, she was startled and disturbed, but this feeling soon passed away; for how could that sweet and life-giving Name be a sign of aught but of blessing and good? She told her secret to her director, a very pious priest of Prasnitz, begging him to tell her what he thought of the

matter. He replied that he had no doubt that it was miraculous, and that it could only be the work of God, and a sign of the great future holiness of the child she bore in her womb. More than this it was impossible to say; but he was very sure that by thus marking her with His Divine Hand God had taken her unborn child for His very own, and that she was bound to remember this in rearing and educating it as belonging to Him in a particular and extraordinary way, and also to consider herself as a happy and privileged mother, for most certainly God intended that soul, to which she was to give birth, to do great things for the glory of His holy Name. This was but ten years after the lowly beginning of the Society of Jesus: none of its children had ever set foot in Poland, its very name was unknown in the remote duchy of Masovia, and no human conjecture could have interpreted this sign of the Name of Jesus as the enrolment of Stanislaus by God's own Hand in the ranks of that Society of which it is the badge and the watchword.[1]

[1] These wonderful circumstances are recorded by Martin Baronius, a priest of Jaroslaw, who wrote a Life of the Saint, published at Cracow, in 1609, when many of the near relations of Stanislaus were living, and they are confirmed by many witnesses in the different Processes of Przemyl, Posen, and Rome as notorious facts. The work is entitled, *Vita B. Stanislai*, Cracoviæ apud Basilium Skalski, 1609, p. 34.

The infant was baptized in the parish church of St. Adalbert, at Prasnitz. The ceremony seems to have been attended by a numerous company of nobility, one of whom, Andrew Radzanowski, was the child's godfather. No sooner was the baptism performed, than, receiving the infant in his arms, he carried him to the altar, and there laying him on the ground, before the Blessed Sacrament, he as it were solemnly presented and consecrated him to God as His chosen child and servant, to be thenceforth the cherished object of His tenderest care.

There were no parish registers of baptism before the Council of Trent ordered them to be kept, but we have undoubted evidence of that of Stanislaus, and of the oblation made by his godfather, in a document signed by the municipal authorities of Prasnitz in 1621. We have also the additional testimony of a very aged priest named Albert Kurek, who was a hundred and ten years of age in 1629, and who stated that he was an eye-witness of the baptism, which he said was performed by the parish priest, D. John Zorokowski. The Church of St. Adalbert, bishop and martyr, was afterwards destroyed by the fury of the Cossacks, but these holy memorials of St. Stanislaus have survived its ruin, and for his sake the spot is held in veneration to this day.

We may easily imagine the care with which the

parents of Stanislaus, especially his mother, would watch over the child, whose dawning sanctity so soon justified the hopes called forth by the wonderful events before his birth. A former servant of the family, when a priest and ninety years of age, spoke of a gravity beyond his years, a tender devotion, a modesty and purity of soul which drew from them the loving words that 'he was an angel now, and would be a saint by-and-bye.'[3] There seemed to be nothing of a child about him but his sweetness and innocence; his whole delight was in holy things and exercises of devotion; and he himself, when in the Novitiate at Rome, confided to an intimate friend that from the first dawn of reason he offered himself entirely to God, vowing to remain faithful to the end in His service.

His first tutor was John Bilinski, a young man of noble birth, who was afterwards Doctor and Canon of the Churches of Pultowa and Plock, and from him we have the account of the marvellous effects produced on his body by his soul whenever the slightest expression offensive to holy purity was uttered in his presence.

The father of Stanislaus seems to have been a hospitable and liberal man, and, both as a great lord and from his open-handed disposition, to have

[3] Bartoli, lib. i. c. ii.

kept open house at Kostkov, where we hear that there was a continual coming and going of friends, vassals, and strangers of all classes. Most of the Polish noblemen were soldiers by occupation, and the conversation became too often rather free, and turned on subjects opposed to Christian modesty. The young Stanislaus changed colour, looked down, and seemed, as it were, to shrink into himself. It was the only way in which a young boy at his father's table could manifest his disapproval of what was going on. But if no one heeded him, and the talk went on in the same strain, then Stanislaus would raise his eyes to heaven, and after keeping them fixed there for a moment, fall from his chair, apparently in a swoon, in which he was unconscious of everything around him, but his father always believed that he was rapt in an ecstasy. And indeed the same thing occurred so repeatedly under similar circumstances, that it was impossible to regard it as accidental.

His father, who always treated him with a tenderness mingled with some degree of reverence, was so convinced that the swoon was supernatural, that he always tried to turn the conversation as soon as it touched on dangerous ground; and when this could not be managed, he would beg the offending guest to have mercy on Stanislaus, and to talk on

some other subject, concluding laughingly, that otherwise they must prepare to see him 'rise so high towards heaven, that the consequence would be a fall to the earth.'[4]

The same thing is related of our Saint by his brother Paul, who survived Stanislaus so many years that he lived to see him everywhere honoured and venerated as 'Blessed.' Paul Kostka's love for his young brother's memory, after his own conversion, was singularly intense and tender, and we read that when he was cited at Prasnitz, in 1603, to give testimony on oath as to all he knew concerning the Saint, his emotion was so great that he was with difficulty able to utter a few broken sentences. 'Why do you ask me these things?' he said to the Fathers of the Society who conducted the examination, 'why do you inquire about this dear brother of mine, rather than about so many holy martyrs and confessors concerning whom you make no question?' Fortunately his old tutor, Dr. John Bilinski, was present, and he succeeded by his affectionate remonstrances in overcoming Paul's repugnance to speak of his brother. 'Speak, my good lord,' he said, 'for what these fathers ask of you is the will of God.' Then he yielded; and began to describe the life of his holy brother, and the mode

[4] Bartoli, lib. i. c. ii.

of education followed by their parents. 'They were resolved,' he said, 'to train us in the true Faith, to have us well instructed in Catholic doctrine, and to keep us from all luxury and self-indulgence. They were rather severe and strict with us; and their own example, as well as that of their dependents, was an inducement to piety, modesty, and temperance, so that not one of our numerous servants might have cause of complaint against us. Every one had as much liberty as our parents to instruct us in our duty, and to administer correction. The result was that we showed respect to every one, as to our parents, and were loved by all.' Paul went on to relate the circumstances which have been already mentioned with regard to his brother's marvellous purity, and the supernatural effects that it occasioned, adding that it was 'a thing well known to all, and a subject of universal admiration.' When he had said thus much, Father Andrew Kanski tells us that his tears choked his utterance, and he entreated Bilinski to answer the rest of the questions.[5]

[5] Process of Cracow, A.D. 1630.

CHAPTER III.

Vienna.

STANISLAUS made good progress in his studies under John Bilinski, especially in Latin, in which lauguage he was sufficiently advanced by the year 1564, when he was fourteen, for his father to decide on giving him greater advantages than he could enjoy under his own roof. Accordingly, in July he and his brother Paul, his senior by about a year, were sent to pursue their studies at Vienna. Their father was induced to make choice of that city by the great and far-spread reputation of a house of education for young men of high birth, which the Fathers of the Society of Jesus had opened there. The house was adjoining to their College, and had been assigned to them by the Emperor Ferdinand for the instruction of youth both in Christian doctrine and in letters. This school had only been opened four years, and it seems to have grown and prospered greatly in that short time, for we hear that it was held in high esteem both throughout Northern Europe and in Italy,

and when the young brothers Kostka were sent there, it numbered among its scholars many noble Austrian, Bohemian, Hungarian, Polish, and Italian youths.

The students had many opportunities of advancing in piety in consequence of their nearness to the fathers' house, the refectory of which, we read, they shared in common; and they learned from them the practice of many penitential exercises, sometimes taking the discipline, in long procession, in common, as they had seen the fathers do. The grace of God brought forth abundant fruit in many of these youths, the children of Lutheran parents, who had sent them to the Jesuit College entirely for the sake of the secular learning and high moral training which they knew were to be had there, and who found their sons, on their return home, so firmly grounded in the Catholic faith, that it was impossible to bring them back to the heresy from which by God's Providence they had emancipated themselves. We read of these young confessors withstanding not only entreaties and threats, but blows and other kinds of ill-usage, and protesting that their faith and practice should always be those which they had learnt at Vienna. Some of these generous souls, 'forgetting their own people, and their father's house,' gave up their inheritance and the comforts

of home, because the exercise of their religion was denied them there, and 'having nothing, yet possessing all things,' begged their way to some Catholic country. There were others to whom was granted the happiness of bringing their parents back to the true Faith by means both of their good and pious example, and of the arguments which they had learnt from the fathers to employ in religious controversy.

The brothers were accompanied by their tutor, John Bilinski, and attended by a body-servant,[2] and two others. The happiness of Stanislaus on taking up his abode in this school of learning and piety can easily be imagined. But surely he must have taught even more than he learned, for his very looks, and much more his innocent and holy life, were in themselves a daily lesson to his companions. One of these, D. Antonio de Meiere, afterwards Grand Almoner to the Empress Dowager Mary, was a witness in the Process of canonization. He said that from his first entering the house Stanislaus was regarded by all as a saint; and that the eyes of his companions were involuntarily turned upon him when he was praying, or assisting at the Offices of

[2] Not long after, this man retired from the world, and dedicated himself to God in the Order of Friars Minor: he was an excellent religious, and lived to a great age. He often talked of his 'little master,' and not only of his virtues, but his miracles.

the Church, as though irresistibly attracted by his angelic modesty and recollection. 'It made me feel ashamed of ourselves,' says this witness, 'to look at him;' and he goes on to add that it was not only whilst engaged in exercises of devotion that Stanislaus seemed, so to speak, to move in an atmosphere of sanctity, but in the discharge of his every-day duties, and in familiar conversation. He loved silence, and seldom talked except when the rules prescribed it. All his free time was given to God, and he often remained for hours on his knees without any idea of the lapse of time, till he fell fainting from exhaustion. Don Antonio said that he got into the habit of watching Stanislaus in consequence of the general opinion of his great holiness; and that he saw him, on more than one occasion, while assisting at Mass or Vespers in the church of the College, in a state of ecstasy, and raised from the ground. The same witness mentions his tender devotion to our Blessed Lady, 'and this he argued from having seen him very often kneeling with clasped hands at the altar rails of the high altar, and at the benches of the choir, devoutly reciting her office and rosary.'[3] Nicolas Lassoicki, a canon of Cracow, was acquainted with Stanislaus when he was about fifteen, in the House of Convictors at Vienna,

[3] Process of Madrid, A.D. 1602.

where he had lived for six months during the reign of Emperor Ferdinand, and he says that the holy child begged him to speak for him to the fathers, that he might be admitted into their Novitiate, which he greatly desired. He avoided all intercourse with seculars, but was humble, obliging, and submissive to every one with whom he had to do, and for this reason he was hated by his tutor and brother, who nicknamed him *the Jesuit.* He heard every day when he was able three Masses, and prayed with great fervour, turning his face to the benches not to be seen.[4] Indeed so great was the impression made on his companions by his beautiful character that they loved him for his sweetness and amiability as much as they reverenced him for his sanctity: and such of them as gave their evidence in the Processes spoke of him as an angel in human form. Two were afterwards eminent—Bernard Macieiowski, who in 1604 became a Cardinal, and John Tornon, Archbishop of Gnesen, the latter of whom died wearing a relic of our saint on his breast, and repeatedly invoking his name. The Cardinal sent many presents to his tomb at Rome, and promoted his canonisation by all the means in his power.

The happy life in the house of the Jesuit Fathers

[4] Process of Gnesen, A.D. 1606.

was of short duration. The good Emperor Ferdinand died the day before Paul and Stanislaus came to Vienna, and his son and successor Maximilian, who was strongly suspected of a leaning towards the Lutheran heresy, eight months after his accession, claimed from the fathers the house in which the Seminary was established, which unfortunately had been lent, not given, by Ferdinand. The students were all dispersed, some returned to their homes, others found lodging as best they could in Vienna. Paul Kostka consulted Bilinski, and the result was a serious trial for Stanislaus. It was determined by the two to take part of the house of the Senator Kimberker, a violent Lutheran. The only reason which seems to have induced Paul to take this step was that the house was one of the best in the quarter where he wished to live. It was in vain for Stanislaus to make objections, Paul was bent on his own will, and had begun to treat his brother in the domineering tyrannical way which soon became regular persecution. Stanislaus comforted himself by thinking that he should still be able to attend the fathers' schools, and the meetings of the Confraternity of St. Barbara, to which he belonged.

Stanislaus studied humanities and rhetoric in Vienna for two years. Among his masters were

Albert Teobulk and Theodore Buseo. Here is the account which the former gives of his saintly pupil: 'There was in him an entire absence of all levity; at the early age of sixteen he was wonderfully serious and sedate in his demeanour, given to silence, and of a sweet and modest countenance. It was his custom to hear three Masses, one before class, one after the first lesson, and a third at the closing of the schools; on festivals he would remain in the church to hear as many Masses as was possible. I have heard it said that he never knew a distraction in prayer, or a temptation to disobedience. He had a great knack of turning the conversation from unprofitable subjects to those of spiritual edification.'[5]

Father Buseo, who was his master at the time he was living in the house of the Lutheran senator, gives much the same testimony, adding that he was in the habit of going to confession and Communion, not once a month only, as was the rule for the scholars of the Society, but every Sunday, as well as on all great feasts that fell in the week. He usually fasted the day before his Communion, and would make some excuse for leaving the supper-table, that he might not be forced to eat by his brother and tutor. Father Buseo says that one of his greatest troubles was being obliged by obedience to take dancing

[5] Process of Posen, A.D. 1602.

lessons, to which he had an insuperable repugnance.[6]

Henry Pisnics, Imperial Counsellor, and Chancellor of Bohemia, deposed 'that he had known Stanislaus Kostka in Vienna in 1564, and affirmed that he too had heard from Father Michael Pold and Father Theodore Buseo, then their masters, that he was much given to the contemplation of heavenly things; often ravished out of his senses; was seen to go into ecstasy, and his whole body to be raised up from the ground; and that the virtue, piety, and modesty of Stanislaus were proposed to them by these said masters as an example.'[7]

He always dressed with extreme simplicity, and never went out attended by a servant unless when his brother insisted on it. There was a deeper reason for this than his humility and modesty, he wished to avoid having any witness to his devotions and to the wonderful favours which God so often bestowed on him at these times. These were, however, so frequent and so well known that it was impossible to keep them secret. One can hardly bear to think of all the suffering inflicted on this young and tender soul by those who should have most dearly cherished him, his brother and tutor,

[6] Process of Neuhaus, A.D. 1602.
[7] Process of Prague, A.D. 1603.

as we shall see in the next chapter; but it is certainly providential that they who knew most of his life, and who, from no creditable motives, watched him so closely, should be the strongest witnesses to his holy life and to the miraculous favours he received from heaven, as to which they gave such clear and full testimony when the grace of God had enlightened their hearts to see that they, to use Bilinski's words, were 'as much beneath him as the earth is beneath heaven.'

It will be remembered how Paul Kostka was obliged to break off weeping in the middle of his evidence at Prasnitz, and how the tutor had to take up the tale. It was then that he related how he and his elder pupil, suspecting that Stanislaus would some day escape from them and enter the Society, gave orders to the servants to follow and watch him whenever he went out. But the Saint's ingenuity baffled them: he took the opportunity of slipping out while the servants were dining at the second table, and his brother and tutor were playing cards or dice, and hurrying to the church of the Society, where he would be found kneeling among the benches. It was his custom to prostrate himself in the form of a cross, then to rise and retire to some quiet corner where, more than once (*sæpius*) the servants found him in an ecstasy and raised

from the ground. When he came to himself, and saw them startled and terrified by what they witnessed, he turned to them with a smile, saying, 'It is nothing, do not be frightened.'[8]

Stanislaus did his best to conceal these extraordinary graces. Father Maggi, Provincial of Austria, writing in 1602 to Father Lanciski, speaks as follows: 'Our dear and blessed Brother Stanislaus I remember very well, having known him and had to do with him while he was a boarder in our College at Vienna, where for his angelic modesty and piety he was looked upon as an angel; but as to the more intimate dealings of God with his soul (*cose sue particolari*) he could not speak, for they were kept secret. I can only state that his marvellous composure, modesty, and devotion, made him greatly loved and admired. I rejoice greatly, and thank God,' he says, 'that He is pleased to manifest this His servant, of whom I once had some charge, and who will, I hope, remember me in His presence Whom he now enjoys *revelatâ facie.*'[9]

Bilinski concluded the evidence he gave at Prasnitz by saying that the three things to which in his opinion the extraordinary sanctity of Stanislaus was due were his avoidance of evil and love of

[8] Process of Cracow, A.D. 1630.
[9] Autograph letter cited by Father Boero.

good company, his intense desire for the religious life, and his wonderful fervour of prayer, which he practised assiduously, never allowing himself to be turned away from it.'[10] His whole life, indeed, was one prayer, and the solitary attraction of Kimberker's house in his eyes was that being very large, and containing a great number of rooms, it afforded him many opportunities of retiring apart to pass long blissful hours of communion with God. His servant, Lorenzo Pacifici, declared on oath that he had scarcely ever seen him studying, but that he was always either praying or reading spiritual books,[11] and as he was distinguished beyond all those who studied with him, we can only conclude with his master that his success was the fruit of prayer, and that the Holy Ghost was his teacher. All his compositions turned on some of the glories of our Blessed Lady, and his childlike and simple love for her led him to write her name, together with some ejaculation to her, from time to time on the margin of any book he was using either for devotion or study; so that when the words, *O Maria, sis mihi propitia*, met his eye, he might reverently kiss that sweet name and lift up his heart to his queen and mother.[12] Never did he enter or leave the

[10] Process of Prasnitz, A.D. 1603. [11] *Vide* p. 46.
[12] Process of Posen.

schools without visiting and adoring his Divine Master in the Blessed Sacrament, and asking His blessing.

He slept very little, always rising at midnight and spending several hours in meditation with his arms extended in the form of a cross, as long as possible, and then folded over his breast. We owe our knowledge of these long vigils to the domestic spies who watched him so continually. The disciplines he was in the habit of taking were so severe that his clothes were stained with blood, and were a continual cause of complaint with Bilinski, who tried every means to induce him to desist from them. But the only effect of his remonstrances was that Stanislaus took care not to let his clothes get stained, and so bear witness against him. Nor was this the only kind of bodily mortification which he used. It might seem, indeed, that one so pure and innocent had small need of chastising the flesh, which had never, in his case, warred against the spirit; but he, wise with the wisdom of the saints, used the same means to prevent those carnal risings which others need to subdue them. And the saintly youth who led this hard life, and practised these severe penances, far from having anything sombre or melancholy about him, was always bright and joyous with that indescribable gaiety which is the inseparable companion of innocence and holiness.

But what must have been the gladness of that blessed soul, so faintly reflected in his happy face, that soul, which for long hours of day and night was rapt in the enjoyment of God, and bathed in the bliss of heaven? Safe, with his God, 'from the strife of tongues and the provoking of all men,' his secret was known to no human heart.

CHAPTER IV.

Persecution and sickness.

It is now time to speak of the merciless persecution which Stanislaus endured from his brother for more than two years, and which was certainly allowed, and in some degree inflicted, by their tutor Bilinski. It seems difficult to imagine how such bitter feelings could have been excited by the gentle, affectionate boy, whose holiness had, as we have seen, nothing forbidding or austere about it. But this is not the only instance of violent anger being produced in worldly persons by the sight of great and singular virtue. Paul Kostka seems to have been a youth whose high spirits and proud temper bordered on insolence. The only person who could have kept him in order was Bilinski, but he had very lax ideas on the subject of authority, and being, moreover, a thoroughly worldly man, as Pacifici describes him, he exercised no sort of restraint over Paul, who, naturally, grew more and more tyrannical every day. He associated a great deal with two young country-

men and relations, as gay and frivolous in their lives as himself, and these three began a continued system of persecution in order to induce Stanislaus to become as they were. Their whole time was spent in visiting and every kind of amusement; they dressed gaily and expensively, regularly frequented the theatres, balls, parties of pleasure, went rarely to the sacraments, never engaged in any acts of Christian charity.[1] Stanislaus, with his holy life and unworldly ways, was an offence and daily cause of irritation to them; the very sight of him was a reproof.

Thus the oft-repeated tale came true once more, verifying the words put into the mouth of the worldlings in the Book of Wisdom: 'We are esteemed by him as triflers: . . . he is become a censurer of our thoughts; he is grievous unto us even to behold, for his life is not like other men's, and his ways are very different.' Paul could not endure the tacit protest of his brother's sanctity, his avoidance of the noisy supper-parties in which he and his companions delighted, his silence during their unrestrained conversations; his simple dress, his frequent visits to the church, the hours he spent in prayer; all these were so many offences which roused Paul to a perfect fury. Bilinski seems to have been less violent, but the line he took must

[1] Bartoli, l. i. c. iv.

have been very trying to a shy sensitive nature like that of our Saint. He used to speak contemptuously of the devotional practices he loved, as only suited to common and uneducated persons, assured him that a nobleman might lead a Christian life without being singular and extravagant, that God only requires the allegiance of the heart, and that in external matters it was his duty to conform to the ways of the world. He said that there was surely something arrogant and conceited in so young a person imagining he was pleasing God by opposing his father, who had sent him (Bilinski) to Vienna for the express purpose of training him and his brother in the manners and ways proper for young noblemen. Irritated beyond measure at the ill-success of all his lectures, Bilinski hurled at his refractory pupil the name of 'Jesuit,' which Stanislaus considered the most glorious name that could be borne by mortal. 'Never,' says Bilinski, in his evidence, 'did the blessed youth have a good word from Paul. And all the time we both knew the holiness and devotion of all he did.'[2] And the account goes on to say that the tutor was cut short in his statement by the irrepressible sobs and tears of Paul, who confessed the truth of all that had been said.'

The persecution soon grew from insulting words to

[2] Process of Cracow.

cruel ill-usage. Paul repeatedly knocked his brother down, beat him with a stick, mercilessly kicked and stamped on him, so that Bilinski more than once had to drag him away, and insist on his letting his brother alone. He did not, however, spare poor Stanislaus even then, for he did not fail to tell him that all these sufferings were due to his own fault, and that he had made an enemy of his brother by his own obstinate folly. Nor was it merely a passing storm. With scarcely any intermission it lasted for more than two years, from the March of 1565, when they left the Jesuit College, where they had been some seven months, till the August of 1567, when St. Stanislaus fled from Vienna.

St. Stanislaus slept in the same room with his brother Paul and the two other young Polish gentlemen. One of these was named Rozrarewski. When an old man he would relate with tears of deep contrition how Stanislaus used to rise from bed, and prostrate himself on his face in prayer, and then 'he would get up, and go quietly up to him, and pretending that he did not see him, would kick him savagely, and jump upon him with all his weight,' and that all the time Stanislaus never moved any more than if he had been dead; perhaps his soul was in an ecstasy and with God.'[3]

[3] Bartoli, l. i. c. iv.; Cf. Process of Cracow, 1630.

Father Oborski, of the Society, before whom Rozrarewski gave his evidence, adds that this circumstance was told by him and his wife to several persons.[4] He was also an eye-witness of a wonderful occurrence, which is related by Father James Golenowski in these words—

'The wife of the illustrious Castellan Rozrarewski told me that she had heard from her husband, how he and some other young men were staying in the same house at Vienna with the brothers Kostka, and that one night they had all gone to bed except Stanislaus, who remained up praying, and reading spiritual books. Rozrarewski spoke sharply to him, saying that he was both injuring his health, and disturbing the others, upon which the gentle boy rose from his knees, and lay down, keeping a candle burning at the head of his bed that he might go on with his book. Presently he fell asleep, and the candle guttered and melted, and at last set fire to the bed. The smoke and flame awoke me, and when I saw the fire all round Stanislaus, I thought he must be half burnt to death, and shouted out, "Stanislaus." He awoke and jumped up, and although we found all the sheets and pillows burnt, he was not a bit injured—not so much as a hair of his head.'

The other companion of Paul was of the Kostka

[4] Process of Cracow, A.D. 1690.

family, and a namesake of Stanislaus. He had a sister, Anna, who became the Abbess of a convent of Benedictine nuns at Jaroslaw. In 1629 this abbess made the following deposition before the Ecclesiastical Court at Przemysl: 'When I was a child, my brothers Christopher and John, who became an Olivetan abbot, told me that Blessed Stanislaus was the son of our relatives John Kostka and Margaret Kriska. My brothers went to Rome, and were received most kindly by the Pope, who spoke at length in praise of the house of Kostka, especially because it had never borne the taint of heresy. There was present at the audience a Polish noble of grand family, secretly a heretic. This conversation, by God's grace, led him to abjure his errors, and to the wonder and delight of every one, he was reconciled to the Church. I knew also Paul, the brother of Blessed Stanislaus, a man of very great piety and devotion, who was not only a very great friend, but a generous benefactor to our convent. . . . When the first engravings of Blessed Stanislaus appeared, and were circulated through the kingdom to obtain public veneration for him, I sent one to one of my brothers, called Stanislaus Kostka, treasurer of the Province of (Polish) Prussia. He came to the convent, and thanked me very much for the present I had sent to him, and taking the portrait out of his pocket,

kissed it again and again with deep feeling, and burst into a flood of tears, exclaiming, "Oh! how often I have stamped upon that blessed youth, when we were studying abroad, and he was prostrate in prayer on the ground, while the others were asleep!" And he went on to tell a number of details about his innocence, charity, modesty, and uprightness.'[5]

The persecutions he endured proved and strengthened the virtue of the young Stanislaus. Far from yielding to his brother's solicitations, or being shaken by his cruelty, he did but increase his prayers and penances, maintaining an unruffled sweetness and patience, and thanking God secretly that he was allowed to suffer for the sake of pleasing Him. To use the words of St. Ambrose, which have been quoted in reference to the constancy of our Saint: 'He did not carry the banner of Christ wrapped round the pole, so as to hide it from His enemies, and thus escape persecution, but went generously to the battle, holding it unfurled on high.' Once when Paul was urging him to consider appearances, and live more like other people, he gave this answer: 'I was not created for this world but for eternity, and for eternity, not for this world, I will live.' The time was to come when these words did a great work in Paul Kostka's heart, and with tears of true con-

[5] Process of Przemysl.

trition, he bewailed the wrong he had done to the brother he knew and loved too late.

It must have cost a good deal to the retiring nature of Stanislaus to make this bold profession, and more still to his loving heart to stand firm against all Paul's entreaties to give in, at least in some degree, to his wishes; for, in spite of everything, he was ardently attached to his brother, and delighted in doing him all sorts of little services, even those that are usually performed by a servant, such as sweeping his room, cleaning his shoes, and other things of the sort. Whenever his conscience allowed him, he cheerfully acquiesced in Paul's wishes. He would not be attended by a servant when he was going to church, or to see the Jesuit Fathers, his visits to whom were a constant subject of vexation to his brother; but at other times he made no difficulty about it. He had a strong feeling about fasting the day before he went to Communion, but unless he was able to absent himself from the supper-table, he took some food rather than annoy his tutor. The dancing lessons, which have been already mentioned, were a considerable penance to poor Stanislaus, but he consented to take them, hoping that his brother, seeing his willingness to obey him in indifferent things, would not press him in matters where his conscience made him refuse. And it must be remembered that this

obedience was shown to a brother only a year older than himself, and who had no right to claim it from him. He never complained to his father, who loved him better than all his other children, nor to his mother to whom he was not only a darling child, but something sacred beyond words: everything was borne in silence, and with a gentleness which never varied.

There is something very lovely in the simple picture drawn of Stanislaus at this time by his servant, Lawrence Pacifici, a Bavarian from Würzburg, who afterwards became a priest, and had a benefice in S. Mosè, at Venice. In the May of 1601 he was summoned to give his evidence before the Papal Nuncio—

'When I was about eighteen years old I went to Vienna to see the world and be educated. I chanced to get into the service of a Polish gentleman named Paul Kostka, then about twenty years old,[6] who was with a master, by name John, who was also a Pole, a man of about thirty, and a younger brother of Paul's, all of whom were at Vienna, in the house of a senator called Kimberker, whom they paid for their bed and board. The two brothers, Paul and Stanislaus Kostka, attended the

[6] Pacifici evidently makes a mistake here, as Paul could not have then been sixteen. He was not a year older than Stanislaus.

schools of the reverend Jesuit Fathers, and I along with them. However, Paul Kostka, the elder brother, was rather too free in his life, and somewhat insubordinate, and given to as great vanity in his style of dress and in his conversation as his tutor would allow. But Stanislaus Kostka, as he was the younger, was as yet without the vestige of a beard, his face full, white and rosy, with an amiable expression that seemed to move any one to sympathy who looked at him, so gladsome and yet tearful were his eyes. Thus I knew him, because I lived, ate, and slept in the same house with him for one or more years, I cannot recollect which. He was always extraordinarily given to prayer. And though he went to the school of the reverend Jesuit Fathers, and studied rhetoric along with me, he never took to worldly eloquence, but always sought in that study for pious subjects. Thus his speeches, such as the students are accustomed to deliver, were generally about our Lady, towards whom he had acquired a great devotion, not merely in the Congregation of Our Lady and St. Barbara, which is kept up there with very special devotion, and of which he, with numbers of the pupils of the Society of Jesus, was a member, but also from a book that he was always reading, the *Mariale*, by Frederick Nausea, Bishop of Vienna, if I remember rightly, which treats with much piety

of all our Lady's feast-days.[7] It was an octavo volume, and Stanislaus always had it before him, and read it, as well as another book called *Hortulus Animæ*—the *Little Garden of the Soul.* Stanislaus Kostka was also much given to prayer and to fasting. He always had by him his ebony rosary. He loved solitude as much as he could consistently with his position, and withdrew from society, even when it was all that could be desired. In conversation he was cheerful and amiable, though so modest. He talked with pleasure to simple folk, readily took pity on others, and was always the first to rise from table.

'He went to confession and communion very often, and heard every day when able several Masses for which he had a great devotion. He seldom went in the streets with a footman in attendance, unless forced to do so by his master, or by his brother. In the house where we were living, he always sought out-of-the-way rooms and quiet corners. He was always at his prayers, and I never remember having seen him studying anything, except it were pious reading or prayer. He liked simple and plain clothes; quite different in that from his

[7] Frederick was chosen Bishop in 1541, after having been coadjutor to his predecessor, John Faber, for four years. Both of them were devoted and zealous prelates. Frederick died in 1552 (Socher, *Hist. Prov. Austriæ, S.J.*).

brother. I never saw him wear gloves. Such a very retired life, and so opposite to that his brother Paul was leading, as they were both of so noble birth, gave rise to constant and almost daily disturbances, to such a degree that Paul was for ever reproaching him, and very roughly too, and sometimes with injurious words, for his too austere way of living, and now and again John, their tutor, was forced to interfere.'

We shall have occasion elsewhere to quote the next sentences. His closing words were as follows: 'I believe without doubt that Stanislaus died a virgin, so very modest was he in words and actions; in all his conduct he was so shy and bashful: nor was there anything that could be said against his manner of life, though his brother, as a man of the world, looked upon it as blameworthy, just because he would not pay any attention to the follies to which he himself gave his whole heart. In fine, this is the truth, that Stanislaus, so young as he was, was a great servant of God and full of virtue, of a very wonderful and exemplary life; for I know he scourged himself constantly. And this was the reputation he had with those about him. And so I beg him to deign to intercede for me, because I hold firmly that he is a saint in heaven.' Such is the testimony of Pacifici.

The simple and rather disjointed story of the old Minor Canon of St. Moses—for it was in 1601 he gave his evidence—loses nothing from the way it is told; its very incoherency gives it the stamp of truth.

In the December of 1566 Stanislaus became seriously ill, and the sickness was attributed to his vigils and penances, and to the ill-treatment of his brother. But whatever was the cause, it was designed by God to be the occasion of most wonderful and signal favours, by which it was His will to visit and console the young Saint who had so faithfully served and loved Him. At the beginning of his illness the devil suddenly appeared to him in the form of an enormous black dog, which sprang upon the bed as if to tear him to pieces. Stanislaus calmly made the sign of the Cross, and so drove him away. This happened three times, after which the monster vanished, and Stanislaus gave thanks to God for his deliverance with tears of gratitude. This is declared on oath at one of the Processes, on the authority of Father Albert Teobulk, who was at that time the Saint's master.[8]

From that day Stanislaus rapidly grew worse, and there was very faint hope of his recovery. Far from dreading death, he ardently desired it as the means

[8] Process of Posen.

of his perfect and eternal union with God; but there was one thing which filled his soul with intense sadness. The Lutheran Kimberker would not allow the Blessed Sacrament to enter his house, and poor Stanislaus vainly again and again implored his brother and tutor to intercede for him with their host. They did not dare to do so, feeling convinced that he would rather turn them and the sick youth out of his house than admit a Catholic priest or the adorable Sacrament. They tried to comfort Stanislaus with the usual unmeaning assurances that he was not ill enough to require the last sacraments, that all would be well if he kept up his spirits, and so on, although we have Bilinski's own admission that he sat up with his pupil seven days and nights, scarcely daring to take his eyes from his face, lest he should pass away at any moment.

So poor Stanislaus lay between life and death, hungering for the Bread of Life, pining for the embrace of his only Love, and, we may be sure, making acts of conformity to the holy will of God, even if He did not choose to give him the one Object of his loving desire. But this was not so. His Heavenly Father loved His dear child too tenderly to deprive him of this supreme consolation, and He Himself taught him how it was His will that he should obtain it.

It has been already mentioned that our Saint belonged to the Confraternity of St. Barbara. About a fortnight before Stanislaus fell sick, he had been keeping her feast, which falls on the 4th of December, with extraordinary devotion. On reading in her Life that she was wont to obtain for her devout clients the immense grace of never dying without Holy Viaticum, he was greatly consoled and rejoiced, and earnestly besought the holy virgin martyr to receive him into the number of her devoted servants, and to obtain for him this great grace. And now, when the time of his extreme need was come, he remembered all this, and fervently prayed to St. Barbara, laying before her with many tears the necessity he was in, and begging her to use the privilege God had bestowed on her in his behalf, and not to forget him, her least and lowest servant, in his hour of need. What followed had better be told in the words of Bilinski—

'I nursed him, staying up seven nights running, as I feared some sudden change for the worse, such as often comes on those who are so dangerously ill. Now one night, while I was near his bed, he told me in clear and explicit words to make a genuflection to the Blessed Sacrament which was being at that moment brought to him, in presence of St. Barbara. And as soon as he had said that, he

grew quite recollected, and remained with his whole body in a reverential attitude. I myself saw and heard all this; I am certain that Stanislaus was not at all out of his mind through the violence of his sickness.'[9] A later witness adds some very interesting details which he had from the canon's lips: 'Canon John Bilinski has often told me with tears in his eyes, that while watching at the bedside of Blessed Stanislaus when he was dangerously ill, the Saint one night with great fervour shook him and said, "On your knees, on your knees! See St. Barbara is coming into the room with two angels, who are bringing me Holy Communion." And thereupon the holy youth got up and fell on his knees, then he said three times the *Domine non sum dignus*, and *Deus cordis mei*—"God of my heart!" and opened his mouth and presented his tongue, most devoutly and humbly. "And I," Bilinski used to add, "remained stupified, as though out of myself with amazement."'

But we have another witness to this wonderful grace besides Bilinski, and it is no other than the Saint himself. When he was in the novitiate at Rome he was much in the company of a Modenese lay-brother, Stephen Augusti, in whose pure and simple soul Stanislaus especially delighted, and with whom he was in the habit of conversing very unreservedly.

[9] Process of Poltova, A.D. 1603.

When he was interrogated on oath as to what he knew about the miraculous Communion of Stanislaus, and the visit of St. Barbara, he replied—'When Stanislaus Kostka and I were in the novitiate at Rome, he was talking to me (as he often did for the sake of learning Italian) on a day very near the feast of St. Barbara. He said, "O brother Stephen, how much I owe to God and to that holy martyr!" I answered that all men owe much to God, but that as to St. Barbara, if he had any particular devotion to her, I should like to hear something about it. He required a little pressing on the subject, but at last he said, "Well, once when I was ill, in the house of a heretic, I had an intense longing for Holy Communion, and I recommended the matter to St. Barbara. While my heart was full of this desire, she suddenly appeared in the room accompanied by two angels bearing the Blessed Sacrament, and I communicated with great joy." When he had said this, he gave a great sigh, coloured deeply, and remained silent, so that I did not dare to ask any more.'[10] Stanislaus afterwards begged his friend to keep the secret, which he did till after the death of the Saint, when it seemed to be for the glory of God to make it known.

The house in which this wonderful miracle took place, passed, after Kimberker's death, into Catholic

[10] Process of Recanati, 10 art.

hands, and the room in which Stanislaus lay sick was converted into a chapel, which is held in great veneration to this day. Stanislaus was to receive another wonderful favour during this illness. He never doubted that the Communion he had received at the hands of an angel was intended to be his support and consolation in the hour of death, for this was what he had asked of St. Barbara, and this is the blessing which she is wont to obtain for her faithful clients. And so it seemed that it was to be, for he grew rapidly worse, and prepared with the most devout sentiments for the moment which all thought imminent. Suddenly, the Blessed Mother of God, whom he had always loved so tenderly, appeared before him, holding her Divine Child in her arms, and coming to the bedside, with a sweet and smiling countenance, she laid the Infant Jesus on the bed, and He and the sick youth embraced and caressed each other. Perhaps this visit of our Lady would never have been known if Stanislaus had not confided it to his confessor, Father Nicolas Doni, in order to induce him to give him his help in obeying the command which the Blessed Virgin gave him before she left the room, which was to enter the Society of Jesus.

St. Stanislaus told these facts also to Father Warscewizki under seal of confession when with him in

Rome. He, as will be seen, made them known after the Saint's death.[11]

Bilinski shall relate what followed. 'I had been watching by the Blessed Stanislaus for so many nights that I was worn out, and I asked some of the servants to take my place for one night. I was so exhausted that I fell asleep immediately and did not wake till morning. Day was just breaking as I crept quietly into the sick room; the servants were asleep, and by the light which was burning, I saw Stanislaus, who affectionately beckoned me to him, telling me that he was perfectly well. I really thought he was wandering, but soon I perceived that he spoke truly, and I wondered greatly. He begged me to give him his clothes that he might go at once to the church to give thanks for his recovery, but I said that he must not do so till he had leave from the doctors. When they came . . . they said in great surprize, that he did, indeed, appear to be quite recovered, but fearing a relapse, they ordered him to remain in bed for a time. . . . Shortly after this, he dressed himself, and we went together to the church, and there was no trace left of his desperate illness.'

[11] Process of Cracow, A.D. 1630.

CHAPTER V.

Flight.

THIS charge given by our Lady to Stanislaus, which has just been related, was not the first intimation of God's will that he had received. Some months before his illness he had been conscious of an interior voice calling him to enter the Society of Jesus, and his whole heart was filled with the desire to do so. But his extreme bashfulness as well as his fear of his father's anger held him back, so that for a long time he kept his own counsel, and never said a word about his vocation to anybody. It would, indeed, have been a hopeless undertaking to ask his father's sanction for this step, and Stanislaus was afraid that to do so would only result in a storm of indignation, in his losing all the blessings he was enjoying in Vienna through being summoned back to Poland, as he was sure he should be, and in people saying that he had not dared to carry out his desire of giving himself to the service of God. In after days he bitterly reproached himself for his

want of courage and generosity in thus delaying to obey the Divine Voice.

The struggle with himself was a very painful one, and had a share, most likely, in bringing on the mortal sickness of which he was miraculously cured. After that, however, he delayed no longer, but went straight to Father Doni, his confessor, and told him of his vocation, his hesitation, and the wonderful things that had happened in his late sickness. No sooner had he spoken than his soul was filled with the utmost peace and consolation, beyond anything he had ever experienced, an abundant reward for the victory he had gained over himself. He always called this delay of his by much harder names than any one else would do, describing what surely was only timidity and perhaps excessive diffidence as pusillanimity and ingratitude. And ever afterwards, when he found in the Society the intense happiness which made it to him like a foretaste of heaven, he would remember that he had risked the losing of it all by his long silence, and would adore the divine goodness in not withdrawing from him the grace which he had hesitated in accepting. He always called it the greatest of his sins.

Now, however, there was no further delay: Stanislaus at once and most earnestly besought the Provincial, Father Lorenzo Maggi, to receive him

into the Society. This request, however, was not granted: the religious were unanimous in their decision not to receive him except with his father's consent. They considered that as he was a man of so much standing and influence in Poland, a great deal of mischief might be the consequence of their receiving Stanislaus against his desire or without his knowledge. They had, indeed, not long before had a good deal of trouble from this very cause in the case of some noble youths at Vienna. It was true that the decision of the fathers not to receive any of the young men of their College without their parents' consent did not apply to Stanislaus now that the house was broken up, but still they felt that his father had trusted to their good faith when he sent him to study in Vienna, and there seemed no hope at all of his desire being accomplished, for he well knew that his father's natural disposition and his extreme affection for himself would be insuperable obstacles in the way. At that time the Papal Legate, Cardinal Commendone,[1] was at the Imperial Court, having been sent there by Saint Pius V. on matters affecting religion. He had been in Poland, and was well acquainted with the Kostka family: his elevation to the purple having taken

[1] Commendone will be remembered as the Papal envoy sent to England on the accession of Mary.

place whilst he was Nuncio at the Court of King Sigismund II. Stanislaus implored him to become his intercessor with the fathers, and he consented to recommend him very strongly to Father Maggi, who, besides being Provincial, was Rector of the College. He, however, was convinced that prudence forbade his granting the request, which otherwise would have been very dear to his heart, knowing, as he did, the beauty and the holiness of the young student's character. The apparent hopelessness of his cause did not discourage Stanislaus. That sweet and powerful voice of the Mother of God which had given him so plain an intimation of the divine will as he knew her command to be, was for ever ringing in his ears and heart: Mary had bidden him do this thing, so it must be possible, however difficult. He renewed the vow he had already made to enter the Society, and resolved, if all other means failed, to beg his way as a pilgrim to wherever there were any Jesuit Colleges, and not to return to his native country, but to go on making his request, first in one place and then in another, till it was granted.

One day—it was in the August of 1567—he was unburthening his weary heart to Father Francis Antoni, a Portuguese who had been Master of Novices in Sardinia, and then filled the office of

Preacher to the Empress Mary, a man of remarkable zeal and prudence.[2] Stanislaus told the Father his design and resolve. Antoni saw that the refusal of the fathers was dictated by wisdom, and on the other hand that Stanislaus was not a hot-headed enthusiast, but older than his years, full of discretion as well as piety, and firmly convinced that he must do God's will at all risks, and obey Him even at the cost of displeasing his father. He therefore recommended him, as he was decided on seeking elsewhere the blessing which seemed out of his reach in Vienna, to apply to Father Peter Canisius, the Provincial of Upper Germany, who was at Augsburg, and, if he failed in persuading him, to make his request to Father Francis Borgia, the General of the Society, in Rome; and he gave him letters to them both.[3]

Stanislaus felt as if he had now taken the first step towards attaining his heart's desire. Not a doubt, not a fear was in his soul: the twelve hundred miles that lay between him and the Holy City, the journey on foot, the beggar's garb, the alms he must ask, the numberless trials which the

[2] Father Sacchini seems rather to think that he had more zeal than prudence, at all events on this occasion, and takes the case in point as an instance how God overrules for His ends any error on the part of man.

[3] Process of Madrid, A.D. 1602.

high-bred young noble would have to face—nothing of all this daunted the generous spirit which looked eagerly on to the end of the pilgrimage, and never glanced at the perils or difficulties of the way. He had put his hand to the plough, and he was not one of those who look back. The only thing now was to find some pretext for leaving Vienna. He had not long to wait: the next time that Paul ill-treated him, instead of bearing his cruelty as usual in uncomplaining silence, he assumed an appearance of indignation, and told him that if he did not change his conduct he would drive him to leave the place, and that he would have to answer for it to their father. 'Go where you like,' cried Paul, in ungovernable fury, 'only don't let me see any more of you.'

Here was his opportunity. He had already provided himself with a dress of coarse stuff and a peasant's hat, and after passing the night in fervent prayer to God, and commending himself with many tears to the protection of his Blessed Mother, he rose early one August morning in 1567, heard Mass and communicated in the church of the Society, called on Father Antoni for the promised letters of recommendation and his blessing, and began his pilgrimage. We read that as soon as he had passed through the gates of Vienna he once more

renewed his vow to God and our Lady, and that with so much gladness of heart that he felt he should be amply recompensed for all his toils, if at the end of a life-long pilgrimage it should be granted him to die in a house of the Society. When he had got some way out of the city he went aside from the highroad, and stripped off his dress, which was suited to a person of his position, put on the pilgrim's weeds he had prepared, tied a rope round his waist for a girdle, and hung thereon his beads. Thus with staff in hand he went gladly on his way, and gave his fine clothes to the first beggar he met.[4]

Pacifici, the servant, in his account of the flight of Stanislaus, says: 'Stanislaus came to me very early in the morning, while his brother Paul and his tutor were still asleep, and told me that when dinner-time came I was to say that he could not dine at home, because he had been invited elsewhere. I did say so, and the dinner passed without his flight being suspected. But when the evening went by, and he did not return to sleep, my masters began to suspect that he had entered religion in the house of the Jesuit Fathers at Vienna. The Fathers, however, said that they knew he was not in their province, but that they believed he was gone to Rome, on which they went home in a great rage,

[4] Bartoli, ch. iv.

inquired particularly what he had said to me, and leaving me in charge of the house, they drove off in a carriage in pursuit of him. This was the following morning: they presently returned after a fruitless journey, and as far as I could make out when they spoke German (for they spoke Polish to each other), they had actually seen him on the road without recognizing him. I remember too that some miraculous circumstances were mentioned, the particulars of which I cannot now recall to memory.'[5]

Canon John Bilinski, in his brief deposition, says: '. . . we followed him with all possible speed, going some ten miles in a very short space of time,[6] but God so ordered it that we could not overtake him. He had confided everything before his departure to a young Hungarian, whose name I forget, and who gave us a letter which Stanislaus had left between the leaves of a note-book, and in which he explained what he had done to us and to his parents.'

There was a report in Vienna, that before following Stanislaus recourse was had to a witch, who discovered, by means of her unholy art, that he had taken the road to Augsburg, and that she mentioned the inn where he would sleep. If there were any-

[5] Process of Venice, A.D. 1602.

[6] A distance of about forty-five English miles, a long journey for Stanislaus under an August sun.

thing in the story, it could only have been the Lutheran Kimberker who consulted the woman, for Paul, after his conversion, expressly denied that he or Bilinski had done so, and he was a good deal annoyed at finding the story told in a Life of his brother which was published at the time. However this may be, he started, together with Kimberker, Bilinski, and a servant, early in the morning, in a carriage drawn by very good horses. What follows is confirmed by the clearest evidence given in the Processes. After driving some distance they overtook Stanislaus, and passed him without recognizing him in his changed dress. In addition to the statement of Pacifici, already quoted, on this head, we have, fortunately, that of the Saint himself. 'I one day asked Stanislaus,' says his brother novice Augusti, 'in the novitiate at Rome, how he had managed to escape, and he told me that he had borrowed some common clothes, and started very early; that his friends followed him with many horses, and came up with him, but that they did not know him, and turned back, thinking he had gone some other road. This he thought was ordered by the providence of God, to Whom he gave thanks for the happiness of having been able to continue his journey.'[7]

Some say that Stanislaus, on seeing his pursuers,

[7] Process of Recanati, A.D. 1602.

turned aside into a by-road, that this excited their suspicions after some little time, and at length they came to the conclusion that the shabby-looking pilgrim they had passed must really have been Stanislaus. They told the coachman to turn back, and must certainly have overtaken him, had not the horses quite suddenly appeared to have lost their strength, and begun to go so slowly as scarcely to stir, and at last they stood still, and no efforts nor blows could induce them to move. The man exclaimed that it was something more than natural, and that it was either God's will, or something else that he could not understand, which was against their going on. We cannot doubt that it was indeed God's will, nor did Paul and his companions; and they were surer still when, on turning round, the horses resumed their wonted speed and vigour. D. Antonio Meier, who has been before mentioned as the friend of Stanislaus, said that Paul told him, crossing himself as he spoke, that he would never go in pursuit of his brother again, after the miraculous things he had witnessed. He states he had heard the story again and again, both from Paul and the others, that for some days everybody in Vienna was talking about it, especially the students of the University.[8] Some

[8] Process of Madrid, A.D. 1602.

of these youths made it the subject of their poetical compositions. The letter which the young Hungarian gave to Paul left no doubt as to Stanislaus' destination.

A few days after Stanislaus was gone a letter was despatched to Rome from Vienna by Father Wolfgang Perringer to St. Francis Borgia, containing a detailed account of the flight of Stanislaus.

Though the greater part of the details have been already given, the letter has a special interest as giving us the impressions of the fathers at Vienna at the time, and enabling us to measure St. Francis Borgia's feelings towards the young postulant when he received him at Rome.

'Very Reverend Father in Christ,—A Polish youth of noble birth, but nobler still by his virtue, has been for full two years begging to be received, and yet his request could not be granted, not merely because he had been our convictor, and was still a scholar in our College, but for certain other reasons. In despair of getting his parents' leave for this step, a few days back he left the city, with the fixed intention of trying if he could obtain what he desired in some other place. He was a great model of firmness and piety, dear to all, a trouble to none, a boy in age, a man in prudence, small in body, great and lofty in mind. Every day he heard two Masses; and he went to confession and communion much oftener

than the other students. He was constant in prayer, and in his studies—rhetoric—he not only got up to his class-mates, who at first were ahead of him, but even got before them all. Day and night his only thought was Jesus and the Society. Oftentimes with tears in his eyes he implored the superiors to accept him, and begged the Nuncio by letter to force them to do so, but when he saw that all was in vain, he determined, even against the will of parents, brothers, and friends, to run away, and by some other means get an entry into the Society. If he could not obtain that in the place to which he was directed, then he was resolved to go as a pilgrim for the rest of his life, in utter poverty and loneliness, for the love of Christ. Those of ours to whom he disclosed his design, tried to dissuade him, and urged him to go with his brother, whom it was said was soon returning to Poland, assuring him that when his parents saw his constancy they would without difficulty consent to his lawful request. But he maintained firmly that he knew his parents better than they, that it was vain to expect anything of the kind from them, and that he fully resolved to put into execution what he had promised to Jesus Christ.

'So, when neither his master nor his confessor had been able to shake his purpose, one morning, after he had been to Holy Communion, without a word to

his tutor or to his brother, caring nothing for his great fortune, he took off the clothes he used to wear at home and at school, put on a wretched canvass dress, and stick in hand, like a poor country lad, he set off from Vienna. His landlord, his brother, and his tutor came to the College to ask where he was. On ours answering that they did not know, for they had not seen him when he left, they at once hired horses and went off in different directions in pursuit.[9] The story runs that they consulted a witch, and that she told them the gate of the city by which he had left, and the road he had taken. They went at full gallop, and reached the place where the soldier of Christ had halted, but they could not get hold of him. For they say that the horses stopped dead with fatigue, nor would they go a step further, at which the driver exclaimed in amazement, that he had never seen the like. So, alarmed at this quasi-miracle, they desisted from the pursuit. What will next happen, God only knows. However, we believe that all has fallen out by God's design, Who wished the youth to escape. This is certain, that he has always shown such constancy as to appear as if he were moved, not by boyish ardour, but by an inspiration from on high.'

[9] Pacifici stated as above that the fathers said he had started for Rome. Probably Father Antoni, who may not have been living in the College, had kept his own counsel. Stanislaus' visit to their church would hardly have been observed.

It may easily be imagined that there was great excitement among the fellow-students of our Saint, who reverenced as much as they loved him. The fact of his desiring to enter religion could surprize none of those who had seen his beautiful and unworldly life, by which he so plainly declared what his words had done to his brother, that he was not made for time but for eternity. But very great was their wonder to think of the high-born boy of seventeen begging his way, for Christ's sake, fearing neither danger nor want nor suffering. We cannot but think that many a young heart must have burnt with emulation on hearing these things, and been drawn from this world to God by the fair example of him who so counted all things but loss that he might win Christ. But these things spoke to none as they did to Paul Kostka: for then—as we may well believe—was sown in his heart that good seed which was to bear abundant fruit by-and-by, when his conversion and penitence, his holy life and death, were won by the prayers of his saintly brother, to be among the brightest jewels in the crown he wears in heaven.

CHAPTER VI.

Stanislaus Kostka and Peter Canisius.

WHILE Stanislaus was journeying on towards Augsburg, with his heart overflowing with spiritual joy and consolation, Paul had written a full account to their father of his flight from Vienna, and of all the extraordinary circumstances attending the pursuit which have been related in the last chapter. He felt that he must rely on these as his justification in his father's eyes for not continuing to pursue his brother; and his account was confirmed by the evidence of the three eye-witnesses, Bilinski, Kimberker, and the servant. He also inclosed in his own letter the note which Stanislaus had written and left in the care of his Hungarian friend. But the wonderful tale had no power whatever in convincing John Kostka that his son's religious vocation was the work of the Holy Ghost, or that the sudden refusal of the horses to continue the journey was due to a miraculous interposition of the Divine Providence, in order to secure the successful issue

of his flight. It is strange to think that what was so plainly supernatural as to carry conviction to the mind of the heretic Kimberker, who at last confessed that the evidence was irresistible, should not have satisfied a good Catholic like John Kostka. It only shows how violent prejudice and anger can obscure the reason and judgment, for one would have thought that the wonderful circumstances preceding the birth of Stanislaus, his holy childhood, and the extraordinary faintings which his father always believed to be supernatural, would of themselves be enough to prepare him almost to expect a miracle in the case of his son, much more to believe it when attested by four persons, one of whom certainly was not likely to be too easy of belief in the matter.

It may be remembered that the servant Pacifici in his deposition referred to certain miraculous circumstances which at that time (thirty-four years after their occurrence) he could not accurately remember. It seems very likely that he referred to the account which his fellow-servant, who made one of the pursuing party, was in the habit of giving of some things which he had noticed: how he had seen Stanislaus cross from one bank to the other of a river, walking on the water as if it had been dry land, and so considerably shortening the way,

whilst his brother had to go a long way round in order to reach the bridge. This man afterwards became, as has been said, a religious in the Order of the Friars Minor, and led a very holy life.

John Kostka received the news of his son's flight with the most furious indignation. He thought that Stanislaus had disgraced himself and insulted his family by running away in a beggar's dress and asking alms as a beggar, in order to become a religious, and he vowed vengeance both on his son and on the Society of Jesus, which he held responsible for the injury done to his honour. He wrote a violent letter to Cardinal Stanislaus Hosius, Bishop of Ermeland, and formerly one of Pius IV.'s legates at the Council of Trent, in which he threatened to dissolve the Jesuit College at Pultowa, which had been founded about two years before by Andrew Noscovski Bishop of Plosk, adding that he would take good care to prevent any member of the Society from ever again setting foot in Poland. He repeated the same thing in a letter to Stanislaus, whom he vowed he would have brought home in chains.

Meanwhile our Saint continued his journey; he was wholly unprovided with money, and begged his food for the day. He passed the night in some wretched hovel, or wherever he could find

any one to take him in out of charity. We are told that his eagerness to reach the end of his journey was such that he walked as much as thirty miles a day, and this could hardly have been accomplished by a delicate youth of seventeen, unaccustomed to fatigue and privation, except by an extraordinary assistance from heaven. It seems hardly possible to believe that Mary, at whose bidding this cherished child of hers was making his way on foot to give himself unreservedly to the service of her Divine Son, did not support and embrace him with a mother's love, and enable him to accomplish all that his fervent zeal led him to undertake. He was continually meditating on heavenly things, engaged in loving colloquies with God and our Blessed Lady, or reciting the rosary; and we read in the processes that whenever in his journey he came to a wayside crucifix or a shrine of the Madonna, he never failed to salute them and to recite some prayers before them, going on his way afterwards refreshed and strengthened both in soul and body.

At length, after walking about four hundred and fifty miles, he arrived at Augsburg, and immediately went to the Jesuit College to inquire for the Provincial, Father Peter Canisius. He found that he was absent, having gone to Dillingen, which is quite a

day's journey from Augsburg; but such was the zeal and eagerness of Stanislaus to be made one of his beloved Society, that without delaying to take so much as an hour's rest and refreshment, he immediately set out again, with that unwearied vigour of a loving heart which Thomas à Kempis describes—

> Ubi amatur non laboratur,
> Aut si laboratur, labor amatur.

It seems that in this part of his journey he was accompanied by one of the Society, a circumstance which has preserved for us the record of a very great and signal favour which God bestowed upon him. When he and his companion had left Augsburg a few miles behind them, they entered a small village, and finding the door of the church open, and some country people going in, they did the same, as Stanislaus greatly desired to hear Mass and to receive the Holy Communion.

They knelt down and prayed for a few minutes, then Stanislaus noticed, with surprize, that there was no preparation for Mass, though there were not a few of the sacred objects familiar to a Catholic to be seen in the church. On inquiry, they heard that it was in the hands of Lutherans, and so bitter was the disappointment of our Saint at not being able to receive his Lord, and still more at finding a Catholic

sanctuary in the hands of the heretics, that he could not restrain his tears. But he did not weep long, for very sweet and very wonderful was the consolation given to him by God. There suddenly appeared before him a band of angels, so bright and beautiful that he instantly recognized them for what they were, who surrounded him, kneeling; one of them carried the Blessed Sacrament with the most profound reverence and adoration, and advancing to Stanislaus, gave him Communion, after which all the angels departed, leaving him so filled with consolation, and so refreshed and invigorated in soul and body that it seemed to him as though he could have walked to the ends of the earth and never known weariness.

Only Stanislaus saw the angels, but he must have told what happened in this Lutheran church to his companion, for Father Albert Teobulk gives an exact account of the occurrence in his evidence at the Process,[10] and says that it was related to him 'by a Father of the Society, who happened to be the companion of Stanislaus on his journey.' The miracle is also reported in the deposition of Father Nicholas Oborski, and it was generally known, and spoken of at the time.

Thus divinely consoled and strengthened, our Saint continued his journey, and on arriving at

[10] Process of Posen, 1603.

Dillingen, at once presented himself to the Provincial, and kneeling at his feet gave him the letter from Father Antoni. As soon as he had read it, and heard from the lips of the holy youth what was the one overwhelming desire of his heart, Peter Canisius raised him from the ground and embraced him affectionately. Stanislaus opened his whole heart to him, as to a father, and with tears in his eyes begged him to receive him into the Society. He protested that, as he had undertaken so long a journey to gain this grace, so he was quite ready to go on to the world's end if so be he could obtain it. Father Canisius wished to receive him on the spot for his own province of Upper Germany, so well could a saint's eye detect true sanctity, but the young postulant thought he was still too near Poland to be safe from his family, who would, he felt sure, make every possible effort to remove him from the Society. There were two others whom the saintly General had summoned to Rome for their theological studies, and Father Peter arranged that Stanislaus should travel with them.

Meanwhile, till the time for starting came, the holy Provincial, after giving him the happy assurance that he was already counted as a novice, thought well to exercise the new candidate in the mean and humble occupations which fall to the lot

of a novice; and this not only to prove his virtue and resolution, but to remove the doubt which naturally exists until a very young and ardent nature has been exercised in this way, lest his fervour should be greater than his solidity and constancy.

At that time the Jesuit Fathers had a very flourishing establishment at Dillingen, for the education of youths of high rank, under the patronage of St. Jerome, to whom the church and house were dedicated. The Academy of St. Jerome was one of the many great and good works of Cardinal Otho Truchses, the Bishop of Augsburg. From the first days of his episcopate, in 1543, he had planned a College of higher studies for the nobility of Suabia. Father Le Jay, one of the first companions of St. Ignatius, had encouraged most strongly this his idea, and soon, under the rectorship of an eminent scholar from Louvain, Cornelius Rosendael, of Haarlem, or Harlemius, as they styled him, it became one of the first places of education in Europe. Among its professors it counted the Dominican Peter de Soto, and Martin Olave, as well as the Scripturist Dr. Lindanus, and Martin Rythovius, both of them afterwards bishops in Belgium, and distinguished students of Louvain. In course of time the various professors were recalled, and new

ones were not to be found, and in 1564, by Father De Soto's advice, and with the Rector's full assent, the Academy was handed over to the Society of Jesus. Theodoric Canisius, half-brother to Father Peter, was the Rector Magnificus, when St. Stanislaus arrived. Father Thomas Darbyshire,[11] in 1564, while yet a novice, had been appointed Superior or Dean of the College. Whether he was there in 1567 is not clear.

Here Stanislaus was placed, and his duties were those of a common servant, waiting on the students at table and attending on them in other ways. The holy Provincial had a twofold object in view, to exercise our Saint in the virtues of humility and self-abnegation, and to give the young men of the College the opportunity of profiting by his example. Both these ends were fully answered. Stanislaus accepted his new duties with the greatest joy and readiness, and discharged them with admirable diligence and modesty. We are told that he made so good and thorough a servant, that no one would have imagined that he had not been regularly taught and trained in these menial offices. His waiting at table is particularly mentioned as exciting surprize and pleasure in everybody from his respectful manner, and attention to the wants of those he was serving.

[11] *Jesuits in Conflict*, First Series, pp. 225—253.

When the news began to be whispered among the young men that the man-servant whose manners they liked so much was equal by birth and breeding to the highest among them, and that he was acting in this lowly capacity simply for the love of God, and to obtain the favour of being received into the Society, they regarded him with the utmost veneration, and we are told that many of them were led, by his example, to leave the world and enter the religious state. One of this number was John Peleycius, of Ulm, in Suabia, who a few months later followed St. Stanislaus to Rome. He had been received as a novice in Germany, but he completed his novitiate in Rome, being there at the time of the Saint's death. He was a true labourer in the vineyard, and after a long life of writing, of teaching, and preaching, in 1606, when sixty-five years old, as Rector in Oettingen he gave his evidence that he knew Stanislaus in the College at Dillingen, and remembered his arrival there from Vienna, as a poor penniless pilgrim, and his waiting on himself and his companions at table, for about a month. It was not till 1623 that the good old man went to his rest, when eighty-eight years old.[12]

All this time Stanislaus was continually lifting up

[12] Agricola, *Hist. Prov. S.J. Germ. Sup.* Dec. ix. n. 311 Process of Freysingen.

his heart to God that He would grant him the fulfilment of his dearest wish, and hasten the happy day which was to give him entirely and for ever to the service of His Divine Son in the Society which is especially His own. His prayers were accompanied by very great penances, and it was particularly noticed that he observed an almost unbroken fast, so that it became a saying in the house that though Stanislaus is always at work, 'he never eats nor drinks.' This saying was reported by one of the witnesses, who said that when he was studying theology at the University of Ingolstadt, in 1665, he had heard it from Father George Herzer, of the Society, who said that several very old fathers had told him of the almost perpetual fast observed by the Blessed Stanislaus all the time he was at Dillingen.[13]

It is certain that we know a very small part of these voluntary mortifications of our Saint; and that they must have been very severe indeed we gather from a mere hint on the subject given by one of the witnesses who says, 'The Blessed Stanislaus, when he was placed by Father Canisius in the College of Dillingen, to wait on the students, and to perform the humblest offices, had so much to suffer, that it seemed as if Almighty God had sent

[13] Process of Posen, A.D. 1663.

him there to gain an abundant crown of merit, as was said by several Fathers of the Society who were well acquainted with the circumstances.'[14]

We are surely justified in referring these expressions to the voluntary mortifications which Stanislaus imposed upon himself, for externally his only sufferings could have been such as were occasioned by his deep humility at seeing the affection and reverence with which he was universally regarded. Hardly had he left Dillingen, than he became an object of pious veneration there, and after his death his room which he had occupied was turned into a chapel.

Meanwhile the Provincial, Peter Canisius, had left Dillingen to continue the visitation of all the Colleges within his Province. He had fully satisfied himself of the virtue and constancy of Stanislaus, and was convinced that not only for his sake, but to avoid the scandal of the violent measures which his father would in all probability employ against the Society, it would be advisable to let him start at once for Rome. And this decision was very prudent, for if, as we shall see, John did not scruple to send his son Paul there, with authority to use all possible means to bring Stanislaus back with him to Poland, he would doubtless have acted with still greater violence if his son had been in Germany, where there were

[14] Process of Kalisch, A.D. 1628.

so many princes and nobles who would have been only too ready to give him their assistance.

On the 18th of September, the Provincial wrote from Ingolstadt the letter already quoted,[15] to St. Francis Borgia, giving him notice that he expected very shortly to send Stanislaus and the two other students to Rome.

It was at the end of the month that Stanislaus was judged to have been sufficiently tried to be allowed to enter on his novitiate, and accordingly he and the young James Levanzio left Dillingen for Munich, where they were to find their other companion, Fabricius Reiner, who as the eldest no doubt had charge of the other two, waiting for them. There, too, they found Father Canisius, who made Stanislaus change the very miserable clothes in which he had travelled from Vienna for others more fit to protect him from the sharp autumn winds which would always blow keenly when they were crossing the Alps and the Apennines. When the three pilgrims came to take leave of him he embraced them, gave them his blessing, and furnished them with the letter of recommendation to the saintly General.

Fabricius had entered the Society when thirty-one years old, eight years before this time, at Cologne. He did not stay long at Rome, for he took the

[15] P. 10.

venient.[1] The old rooms alone, hallowed by St. Ignatius, were religiously preserved, when Cardinal Edward Farnese, the great-nephew of the builder of the church, reconstructed the house.

Of the Roman College of St. Stanislaus' day not one stone has been left on another. It then consisted of a large irregular building, a portion of of which had been the palace of the Cardinal Caraffa, who afterwards became Pope Paul IV. His sister Victoria Tolfi, widow of Camillo Orsini, Marchese di Valle, had determined to turn the palace into a convent, and had added considerably to it. The whole was standing empty when Pius IV. came to the Papal throne, and he persuaded the charitable lady to make it over to the Society. They built in addition the small church of the *Annunziata*, which was some years after, to make way for the immense building dedicated to St. Ignatius. In 1582, Gregory XIII. began the new College, the one now in existence. Nor again was there much of the present building on the Quirinal standing in St. Stanislaus' time.

As was naturally the case in the infancy of the Society, it was impossible at once to organize the Order completely, and it was only during the Generalate of Father Laynez, in consequence of

[1] *Le Gesù de Rome.* Victor de Buck, S.J. Bruxelles, 1871.

a decree of the first General Congregation, that an effort was made, but in vain, to establish separate Houses of Novitiate. On Laynez' death in 1565, the second General Congregation commissioned his successor, St. Francis Borgia, to draw up rules for such houses, and to procure, what his predecessor had found impossible, separate buildings for the Novitiate. St. Francis took the work at once in hand, and on the 20th of September of that year promulgated a set of regulations, a copy of which exists in St. Stanislaus' handwriting, and which have been embodied in the *Institutum* or code of laws by which the Society of Jesus is governed. Just at that very time the opportunity presented itself for procuring a suitable site. Mgr. John Andrew Croce, Bishop of Tivoli, himself a nobleman of that town, one of the Fathers of the Council of Trent,[2] was proprietor of a parish church on the Quirinal called Sant' Andrea, to which were attached two small houses and a tolerably large garden. He had a brother, Lucius, in the Society; and, as the spot was considered a healthy one, the Father pressed the Bishop[3] to make it over to the Gesù to serve as a sort of sanatorium for the sick and invalided. In fact, close by, the Popes had begun their summer palace, which

[2] Ughelli, *Italia Sacra. Tibur.*
[3] Sacchini, *Hist. S.J.* pars iii. l. ii. n. 16.

was subsequently to grow into that stately building, so full of the memories of Pius VII. and Pius IX. and so desecrated in these our days. Mgr. Croce obtained from the Pope, St. Pius V., the transfer of the parish to another church, and made over the whole property to St. Francis Borgia, who had not then as yet been elected General. The next year, 1566, the Gesù was so overcrowded that what had been decided on in principle became necessary in fact. Another kind friend was found, Donna Giovanna di Aragona, Duchess of Tagliacozzo, mother to the hero of Lepanto, Mark Antony Colonna, possessed a property adjoining that of Sant' Andrea's, consisting of a house and garden. As soon as she heard the General's intention, she became desirous of the privilege of being the foundress of the novitiate, and not only made over this property, but gave in addition six thousand ducats.[4] The lay-brothers set to work to make the necessary alterations and to adapt a portion for a chapel, and so quickly was it done that at the beginning of August, the great missionary, Father Julius Mancinelli, brought the first nine novices from the Gesù to train them up in the solitude and seclusion of a place so soon to be hallowed by a novice-saint. Still, the larger portion of the novices con-

[4] Boero, *Vita di S. Stanislas*, p. 94.

tinued to remain at the Gesù under Father Alfonso Ruiz, while some were, at all events, as we shall see, now and again at the Roman College. The new, or second Novitiate, as it was called, had thus only been opened the very year before St. Stanislaus came to Rome. The building was however rather a hut than a house; and though only twenty people lived there in all at the beginning, they were in sad straits for room. Sacchini, from whom we borrow this account, writing in Sant' Andrea, somewhere about 1620, says the Novitiate had then been so enlarged that without counting the aged fathers, it held over a hundred. On S. Andrew's day, 1566, the foundress came with her son to the Mass and sermon, and there in presence of a number of Cardinals and people of family, the sign of gratitude to founders, a large wax taper, was offered to her, and she placed it in her son's hands, as her successor.

We are not told how long was the stay Stanislaus made at the different houses; we learn only that after leaving the Gesù he was sent to work in the kitchen of the Roman College, no easy task where there was a community of a hundred and thirty,[5] and then went to spend his last days at Sant' Andrea. Father Boero has printed a list of all his fellow-

[5] Sacchini. *Hist. S.J.* pars iii. an. 1566.

novices, and certainly Sacchini says with truth that a nobler band have rarely been gathered together. During the ten months that Stanislaus passed in the noviceship, about one hundred and seven came and went. But it is impossible to say which of these actually lived under the same roof with him, as we have seen that they did not all live together. The very large majority, more than half the entire number, were Italians, from every portion of the Peninsula; there was a fair sprinkling of Spaniards, there were Germans, French, Scotch, English, Flemings, and four Poles besides the subject of our story. Twenty-eight entered as lay-brothers, and of these twenty-two were Italians; but few of them had proper names to record on the register. Another, Antony de Madrid, though already thirty-eight, and a man well educated and of gentle blood, chose the lowly service of a brother, and for his reward had to nurse St. Stanislaus in his last illness, to lay him out, and bury him when dead, as infirmarian at Sant' Andrea. Antony was the nephew of Father Christopher de Madrid, who, when hardly more than a novice, was appointed by St. Ignatius, at the close of his life, to assist Father Polanco, the vicar of the Saint, in the government of the whole Order, and who afterwards was chosen Assistant by Father Laynez, before he had made his solemn vows, and by St. Francis Borgia, Superior of the Gesù. This

last office he held till his death, 1571.[6] The humble lay-brother was for many a long year assistant to the Master of Novices of Palermo, and so gentle was he in his charge that the novices used to say that they had found a more tender mother in religion than God had given them in the world. The example of his sainted fellow-novice was always on his lips as a lesson to the young men; and he had borrowed from him his love of the Blessed Sacrament, so that when old age prevented any active duties, he would spend hours, four hours at a time, before the Tabernacle, erect, without resting upon anything, the love of his heart supporting the weight of his four-score years.[7]

First on the list is John Hay, born at Dalkeith, of the Hays of Dalgety, and nephew of Father Edmund Hay, first Rector of Pont-à-Mousson, and who held such high posts in the Society. Uncle and nephew had left Scotland together in 1562, and John had studied his philosophy at Louvain before going to Rome. Ten years later, as a Master of Theology, he defended the doctrine of the Blessed Sacrament, at the College just opened at Vilna, before a number of Calvinists, none of whom dared to descend into the arena for the three days that he

[6] *Hist. S.J.* pars iv. l. i. § 38.
[7] D'Aguilera, *Hist. S.J. Prov. Sic.* an. 1609.

propounded his theses.[8] His Rector, Father Warscewizki, who presided at the one-sided conflict, had been, as we shall see, his fellow-novice at Rome. Six years later we read of him when called to Pont-à-Mousson from Poland, and staying for his health with a doctor at Strasburg, taking up the defence of the same Mystery with equal success against Professor Pappus of that University. He was dressed as a layman, but the Chancellor saw through his disguise and declared he must be the devil or a Jesuit.[9] He passed thirteen years in Belgium, and died in 1607, sixty-one years old, at the University of Pont-à-Mousson, of which he was Chancellor.

Three months later, on the 24th of April, entered Lelio Sanguigni, a Roman, of man's estate, who, when four-and-thirty, lost his father, murdered by the hand of a relative. Lelio forgave the assassin, and God recompensed him by a call to the Society. He begged the Father General, Everard Mercurian, to take him to St. Pius V., and there he implored mercy for the murderer. Three years later, when a body of Pontifical troops had been sent into France to support the Catholic cause against the Huguenots, three Jesuit Fathers accompanied the soldiers, Lelio

[8] Sacchini, *Hist. S.J.* an. 1570.

[9] *Ibid.* an. 1576. Cf. *l'Universitié de Pont-à-Mousson.* Par le P. Adam, p. 104.

and another brother went with them. Worn out with fatigue and sickness, Lelio was the last to succumb, doing the work of five, burying even the dead. When Father Possevino arrived to their aid, Sanguigni fell under the work and was called to his crown, after three short years of religious life.[10]

On the 10th of September, a year before St. Stanislaus, Bartholomew Pamfili Ricci, a youth of twenty-two, born at a place of melancholy renown, Castel Fidardo, joined the novitiate. His happiness it was in after years to be for some time the Novice Master of St. Aloysius; and when he held the same post at Nola, Blessed Charles Spinola was living in that town with his uncle, the Cardinal Philip. Father Bartholomew knew the young man as he was attending the Jesuit College, and he foretold to him his future vocation, and his glorious but terrible death in the great holocaust of Japan. It was not long after that Blessed Charles enrolled himself among his novices. Father Ricci died in Rome before his prophecy was fully accomplished.

One Judas there was among the hundred; and that one, alas! our own countryman. Christopher Perkins had been a student at Oxford, and entered the Society a month or so after Father Ricci. After many years spent in Germany, he was in after life dismissed,

[10] Sacchini, *Hist. S.J.* an. 1569.

and came to England with William Cecil, afterwards Earl of Exeter, whose acquaintance he had made in Rome.[11] Here the wretched man apostatized. Cecil recommended him to Lord Burleigh, his great uncle, and obtained for him the deanery of Chester. Queen Elizabeth intrusted him with diplomatic missions, and King James in reward for his activity against the Catholics honoured him with knighthood. The unhappy man, not content with such pay, aimed at a connection with the favourite Buckingham, and married the aunt of the Duke. But he won but little esteem for his pains.[12] Christopher Perkins died in 1622. Curiously enough, a daughter of Lady Perkins appears to have left England to become a religious.[13]

About a fortnight later, on November 8th, 1566, Paul Neükirk arrived from Prague, where he had already been received into the Society, and whose after-life was to be such a striking contrast to that of his unhappy fellow-novice, which has just been described. After some six years spent in Rome he went to study his theology at Vienna, and then in 1576 was sent as Professor of Philosophy to

[11] Dodd's *Church History.*

[12] Note of Father Persons. Father Grene's *Collectanea;* Stonyhurst MSS. *P.* fol. 48.

[13] MS. note-book of Dr. John Southcote, in the possession of the Bishop of Southwark.

Prague. Campion was there at the time as Professor of Rhetoric, and when Father Neükirk two years later was ordained priest and vacated his chair, the future martyr was appointed his successor. His life was a full and useful one, governing the Colleges of Prague, Gratz, and Vienna, in which city he died when fifty-three years old.[14]

A week after the young Bohemian arrived a venerable priest whose life was more stirring, and whose end was singularly blessed. Luigi Corbinelli, a Florentine gentleman of ample means, had entered the priesthood, when a sort of constitutional depression induced his medical advisers to send him in pursuit of distractions across Europe. He was able to pay the expenses of some cheerful companions, and wherever there were any grand festivities, there Corbinelli was sure to be found. Naturally enough, the double royal wedding at Paris in 1599 attracted the party. The splendid gaieties were brought to a sudden close by the death of Henry II., and Luigi was actually present at the tournament when the King was wounded. The blow struck the priest's heart, and read him a lesson which he did not forget, and he determined, spite of his delicate health and advanced years, to enter the Society of Jesus. He lived long enough to be the happy sharer of

[14] *Hist. Prov. Bohem. S.J.*

St. Aloysius' dying hours, for into the infirmary, which was his home, the Saint was carried when the fever came upon him. The aged priest persuaded the brothers to bear him to the bedside of the young man, and compelled him to give him his blessing. Again and again, though lying in different apartments, he appeared to the Saint begging his prayers; and when, after obtaining permission to be laid in the same grave as Aloysius, he left the world nineteen days before him, Gonzaga told Father Bellarmine that Corbinelli's soul had tarried but a moment in Purgatory.[15]

But Corbinelli was not long the oldest among the novices of his day. On Epiphany—the first who entered in the new year, 1567—came Francis Torres, a Spaniard, who had grown grey with many a long year of study. Like his uncle Bartholomew, the celebrated Bishop of the Canary Isles, he had gained even among his countrymen a great name for his profound philosophical and theological lore. There was hardly a library in Europe unvisited by him. And the Pope had paid him the special compliment of summoning him to the Council of Trent. It was during its sessions that he came to know and to esteem the new Order of St. Ignatius, till at last, spite of his great age, he put his neck beneath the

[15] Jouvency *Hist. S. J.* pars v. lib. xvi. n. 4.

yoke and became a child again for Jesus Christ. There is a pleasing memory attached to his death. Just as Cardinal Bellarmine died on the feast of the Stigmata of St. Francis, a feast whose extension he had obtained to the universal Church, and the office for which he had arranged, so Father Torres defended by his learning the feast of our Lady's Presentation, which some critics had proposed to strike out from the calendar, and it was on that day, in 1584, that his soul went to God. Others there were who, though comparatively young, had made their mark in the world. Doctor Francis de Leon, of Burgos, had gained such a repute as a jurist as to have been one of those chosen to revise the Decree of Gratian; and Doctor John Francis Prandi, whom Bartoli tells us was but twenty-seven on his entry into religion, had previously held the first chair in the University of Bologna, and had achieved great fame in philosophy. On July 22 the same year, 1567, there came from the Vatican the son of the Duke of Atri, who had been the major-domo of two Popes, one to whom the highest honours were open both in Church and State, and two of whose uncles wore the purple. But the name of Claudius Acquaviva, was to win a wider fame as the future General of the Society. At home, at College, at Court, he had borne a spotless name. His mother, of the great

house of Spinelli, a woman of rare virtue, had taught him piety in his earliest days, and he never forgot her lesson. His family put no obstacle in his way, much less did the saintly Pontiff, though he lost in him a very trusted and dear friend. 'If the Holy Spirit calls you there will be certainly no stay on our part. Go in God's name, and may He bless and prosper you!' Nor did Claudius remain a night away, when once the Pope's leave had been obtained, though it was midsummer, and the narrow novice house burned like an oven in the southern sun. He it was who took charge of St. Stanislaus on his arrival, and gave him the Exercises, but he soon perceived that the scholar knew more than he could teach him. We cannot resist telling two anecdotes of his novice life. Light-hearted as a novice, he was rushing along one day with a basket containing the dinner of some one who had come to make a retreat. In his haste he charged up against poor old Brother Torres. The venerable novice, *accusator sui*, went down on his knees to beg pardon for being in his way, while Claudius in turn threw himself at Torres' feet, and each excused the other and begged the other's forgiveness. Claudius did return once more to Court, but it was with a novice, one of the Visconti of Milan, who was older than himself, each dressed in tattered cassocks with an alms-sack on their back.

Thus they went right up even into the Papal antichamber, the Pope's nephew, Cardinal Alessandrino, and others of the Sacred College, and some noble ladies present, wondering at the strange change in these two of almost royal birth.[16]

Another of equal nobility in the world was Fabio de Fabiis, who, like Claudius, had ever kept himself singularly innocent in spite of his splendid position in the world. Like Claudius, too, he did not enter the Society until in full manhood—at the age of twenty-four. Unlike Claudius, he was short and deformed, and many stories are told of how he turned this natural defect into a source of self-humiliation. In 1594, as the acting Superior of the Professed House at Rome, he had the arduous duty of receiving and entertaining the fathers who came from every quarter of the globe to take part in the fifth General Congregation, or Assembly of Deputies from the whole Society. He met them as they arrived, took them to their rooms, washing their travel-stained feet, and going on any errand they might ask. His simple manners and plain looks, his few words and active readiness, made them take him for a lay-brother, and they gave him many an order and many a commission that they would not have liked to give to a father. As soon as they

[16] Sacchini, *Hist. S.J.* pars iii. lib. iii. n. 56.

found out their mistake, they hastened to make their apologies. He only laughed, and ran off to seek fresh work and fresh humiliations. Even though he did not, as his family boasted, come down from the Fabii, he had a soul worthy of so good a stock; and, in the many high places of trust he held, he always proved as large-minded and gentle-hearted as he was humble and mortified. Strangely enough, he met his death out of pity for a bull, which, being driven with a herd of cattle along the road to St. Paul's, had fallen down through weariness, and was being worried by a dog. Father de Fabiis, though more than seventy years old, ran up to beat the dog off with his cloak. The bull suddenly got on its legs and charged its protector, and if the young Michael Perretti, grand-nephew of Sixtus V. had not been riding by on his return from hunting and shot the infuriated animal, the poor Father would have been gored to death on the spot. As it was, he lingered but for a short time in great agony, an agony which the horrid remedies of the surgeons only served to aggravate.

Two other fellow-novices of St. Stanislaus may be mentioned together—Benedict Giustiniani, of the great Genoese family, and Jerome Piatti, or Platus, as we best know him. Benedict, with Austin Giustiniani, son of the Doge Paul, was Professor of

Philosophy to St. Aloysius in 1591. He won a great name as a preacher and as a theologian, and for twenty years was Rector of the House of the Penitentiaries of St. Peter's, where he died in a ripe old age in 1622. Jerome was of a noble Milanese family. He had, like so many, a hard fight for his vocation, and the love that he bore it is written in his well-known work, *The Happiness of the Religious State.* In after life, while Consultor at the Gesù, he had the care of St. Aloysius, who was then a novice; and it was as Novice Master at Sant' Andrea on the Quirinal that Father Platus ended his useful life. He wrote, for his brother Flaminius, who had just been made Cardinal, a treatise on the duties and dignity of that state, but he never attempted to publish it; it only appeared after his death. Another work on *The Excellency of the Marriage State* had a more untimely end. He had written it, through love of poverty, on odds and ends of paper, and the backs of letters, and when it was nearly completed, a good-intentioned lay-brother, who had come in to sweep out his room, seeing his table littered with heaps of scraps, carried them off and threw them all away. Father Piatti told him what an amount of work he had undone, without another syllable of reproach or blame.[17]

[17] Patrignani, *Menologio,* August 13.

There was among the novices Jerome, a brother of the Father Martin Olave, so well known to any that have read the Life of St. Ignatius, the learned Doctor of Trent who entered, as did Jerome Olave, late in life, and who was on his death-bed when the Saint died. A few days after him there arrived, on May 3, 1567, a father and son, Tarquin Peruschi and his boy Pliny. Pliny changed his pagan name into that of John Baptist, and in after life was the first Superior of the Professed House of Venice, and first Provincial of the newly created Province of Milan.[19] A physician from Brescia, bearing a name, now of ill-omen, Augustin Mazzino, came two days before the first and last Christmas that St. Stanislaus spent in religion. Augustin died, an old man of sixty-seven, an apostle in his own country, labouring for souls in his native place. If the apostate Perkins was a disgrace to the soil from which he sprang, England has no reason to be ashamed of the three other fellow-novices of our Saint. These were Giles Fesard and the two Rastalls, all of whom came after St. Stanislaus had arrived. Giles was thirty years old when he joined the Society on February 23, 1568, the year of the Saint's death. When he had completed his studies he was sent to Prague, to be Socius or Assistant to Father John Paul Campano,

[19] *Hist. S.J.* 1578.

an Italian, the Novice Master of what afterwards in 1625 became the separate Province of Bohemia. His gentleness and willingness to oblige made him beloved by all. A holy lay-brother, the cook of the house, was meditating, on the feast of the Visitation, on the wonders of that day, when he saw the whole place where he was kneeling ablaze with light far brighter than that of the summer sun; and in the midst of this glory he beheld our Blessed Lord raising up, with outstretched hand, Father Giles, the Englishman—for so they called him. The brother told his Rector, and three days after a deadly fever fulfilled the vision. *Venite exultemus Domino! Exultate justi in Domino!* was Fesard's answer to the notice of approaching death.[19]

Edward and John Rastall were probably[20] the sons of the eminent lawyer Judge Rastall, who, faithful to his religion, abandoned place and country to settle and die in Louvain, where his body rests with that of his worthy wife, Winifred Clement,[21] at the right hand side of our Lady's altar in the great Church of St. Peter in that town. The Judge's father was a well-known printer, who married a sister of the martyr chancellor, Sir Thomas More. Good

[19] Nadasi, *Annus dier. memorab.* Jul. 4.
[20] A. Wood, in *Athenæ Oxon.* does not confirm this.
[21] See *Troubles of our Catholic Forefathers.*

blood therefore ran in the veins of the brothers, both of whom had been born at Gloucester. Edward, the younger of the two, entered the first, being then twenty-five; he went afterwards to finish his studies at Ingolstadt, and died on June 17, 1577.[22] His brother John, thirteen years his senior, entered three weeks later, on April 6, 1565. He had been as a boy at Winchester School, and so moved up naturally to New College, Oxford; but, like his father, he sacrificed everything for the Faith, and followed him to Louvain. He was ordained priest, and became noted for his skill in controversy, a great adversary of Jewell.

After his novitiate he was sent as confessor and consultor to the Jesuit house at Hall, then to Augsburg, and finally to Ingolstadt, where he was made Rector of the College of the Society. While he filled that office, Father Paul Hoffæus, the zealous fellow-labourer of Blessed Canisius, then Provincial of the Province of Upper Germany, fell ill. Father Rastall bravely offered his life to God for one he prized more highly than his own. He made his subjects pray for a recovery which meant his own death, and even went in pious pilgrimage for the same end to a sanctuary outside the town called Our Saviour the Greater. God heard his

[22] *Hist. Prov. S.J. Germ. Sup.* Dec. iv. n. 264.

prayers; he sickened of the very illness of which the Provincial was suffering, and died. Father Hoffæus recovered. This was in 1577.[23]

There was, besides Father Hay, another Scotch novice, called in Father Boero's list Thomas Smetom (Smeaton?), but no record of his life is known. The mention of Germany reminds us of Mathew Maïrhofer, a Bavarian, who came to the Novitiate the same day as the two Peruschi, a youth of seventeen, born at Landshut, and who in after life was to be the first professor of the Society to lecture publicly at Munich, his lectures being on moral theology. For twenty years he was Rector in the Jesuit College of that capital, and he died at the great age of ninety-one, in 1641.

The countrymen of St. Stanislaus were four in all. One of them, who arrived with two of his former household a month after the Saint, deserves a special mention. He was a townsman of Kostka, bore the same Christian name, and was afterwards to be the first to write and publish his life. Of noble family, Warscewiski had been sent in the earlier days of the Reformation into Germany, where he fell under the influence of Melancthon and abandoned the Faith. Yet for all that he was received at the Catholic Court of the King of

[23] Not 1600 as Oliver has it.

Poland, favoured by him, and he even received from his hands rich ecclesiastical benefices. It was only quiet thought and study that brought him back to the Faith; but when he fully realized what he had done, he at once changed his whole life, and withdrew from Court. In course of time he became a priest, and refusing a bishopric that was offered to him, spent his time in preaching to the people. From Cardinal Hosius he heard of the new Society of Jesus, which that great Prelate had learnt to appreciate at the Council of Trent. The Cardinal took him over to see the College he had founded for the fathers at Braunsberg. Strangely enough he recognized the place as one that he had seen in a dream when but a child. He made the acquaintance with the Rector, Father Feo, and through him heard for the first time of the Exercises as a means best suited to enable him to decide the difficulty uppermost in his mind as to the choice of a state of life. Though he recognized clearly the call, he found it no easy thing to bring his proud soul under the cross of obedience. God's grace triumphed, and he arrived at the Novitiate of Rome on Christmas Eve. It was zeal for souls that had been his great attraction, and a plentiful harvest he had in his new life. Warscewiski was a hard and unwearied labourer for twenty-four years in Poland and in Switzerland,

until, in 1591, he gave up his life a martyr of charity assisting the plague-stricken at Cracow.[40]

Our list has been a long one. Two more names yet remain, perhaps the worthiest of record, though we can give them little space. Both were to work in the same field, one was to win the crown of martyrdom, the other, like St. Francis Xavier, was to seek it in vain. Alessandro Valignani, son of a gentleman of Chieti, first turned his thoughts to the army, then, warned by what looked like a divine interposition, the words of a stranger, he took to study, and won the much coveted degree of doctor when but nineteen years old. Meantime his father's friend, the former Archbishop of Chieti, Cardinal Caraffa, had become Pope, and the young doctor went to Rome to seek ecclesiastical preferment. Already he was auditor or counsellor to the great Cardinal Altemps, and his way to honour seemed easy, when God called him to the Society, and St. Francis Borgia had the consolation of receiving into the noviceship one who was greatly to serve the Order. From that day, May 27, 1566, he never looked back. As a pledge of his resolve to conquer himself he put on a hair shirt, nor did he ever lay aside a like penance till his death. So swift and sure was his flight, that he who had been so lately a novice was soon

[24] Patrignani, *Menologio*, Oct. 3.

ready to be the master; and in 1578 he was made, by the General, Visitor with full powers over all the houses and missions of the Society in India, China, and Japan. For thirty-three years he laboured, and he never rested till he met his death like St. Francis Xavier on a small island facing Macao. His life would be a real history of some of the greatest triumphs Christianity ever attained.

Rodolf Aquaviva, the last of whom we shall speak, was the head of the band who laid down their lives for Christ in the Island of Salsette. The future martyr showed of what stuff he was made when as a mere boy he battled for his entry into the Society. By dint of constant entreaty, he at last persuaded St. Francis Borgia to admit him to the Novitiate at Sant' Andrea, subject to his father's approval, whose consent he had in vain tried to obtain. Delighted at his partial success and at finding himself among the novices, his joy was brought to a sudden close by the arrival of his eldest brother Julius, the future Cardinal, with the news that his father, the Duke of Atri, absolutely refused his approval. His uncle, Claudius, then, as we have seen, a novice, was sent by the General to bid Rodolf obey and go back home. Somehow or other the boy suspected what was going on, and went and hid himself. Claudius [illegible] him at last, but no arguments were of avail,

and they had to drag him to the door. There a fresh scene ensued, for Julius and some young nobles were awaiting him, with St. Francis Borgia. He clung to his vocation to the last, and St. Pius V. had at length to intervene, and urge the father no longer to stand out against so clear and strong a call. For Rodolf's was not the outcome of mere fancy; his life had been one of most rare holiness, all his leisure time had been given to prayer and to acts of charity towards the sick and poor; nor was it any passing attachment to his uncle Claudius, for he offered the General to go, it did not matter where, so long as he would but receive him.

Ten years later, 1578, he had won another favour, and was, after many a refusal, sent to the East Indian missions. Five years of hard labour yet remained to him. He was the chief of those who at the request of the Emperor Akbar, then in the height of his power, went to Futtehpoor, the city which he had just created, and the ruins of which still attest his power. It was on his return to Goa that he received the appointment of Rector of the College in the Island of Salsette. He had hoped to have received his long wished for crown when in the centre of India, and, when the news of the deaths of the two martyrs, Father Campion and Father Bryant, reached him, 'Ah!' he exclaimed, 'these, these are

men, we poor creatures do not deserve such a lot.' It was not so long after[25] these words that, the first of a band of five, Rodolf fell beneath the blows of the idolatrous Hindoos of the village of Cuculin. His blood was the seed of other martyrs, for it was on learning what had happened that Blessed Charles Spinola made up his mind to enter religious life.[26]

With these companions, then, did St. Stanislaus pass the days which God had still reserved to him to perfect himself for his crown. Of such various ages, of so many tongues, from such different stations of life, grave professors, courtiers, peasants without a surname, nobles whose races dated from the days of the Roman Republic, all were of one heart and one mind, a beautiful concert of service and praise to God, Stanislaus' the clearest, the sweetest, the purest, voice, the rest catching some of his fervour and of the richness of his grace.

[25] Though Father Campion died in 1581, the news does not seem to have reached India for more than two years later.

[26] *Vide* Patrignani, *Menologio S.J.*; and Tanner's *S.J. Militans.*

CHAPTER VIII.

In the Novitiate.

THE life of the novices in the Society of Jesus, and, indeed, in almost any religious order, is made up of a regular succession of duties, many of which may seem insignificant and even trivial to those who only read of them, and do not consider the intention with which they are all performed, and the continual action on the soul of the obedience which enforces them. For this reason it is hardly possible to convey by description a fair idea of the daily routine of life on which Stanislaus Kostka entered when he went to live at Sant' Andrea. But, as it happens that the order of the day which has been followed faithfully in all substantial respects since his time was drawn up by the holy General, St. Francis Borgia, who admitted him into the Society, and that it has been given, in its original form, by the latest biographer of St. Stanislaus; it may be well to set out in a few paragraphs the main features of the regulations under which so many happy souls have been trained to perfection.

The hour of rising is not fixed in the regulation as it lies before us: it must have been very early, but at least seven hours after the retiring to bed for the night. The novices were roused by a bell, after which they had half an hour allowed for dressing—during which they were to say some short prayers—for covering their beds up, and other necessary matters. They might spend what they had to spare of this time in prayer or reading, as a preparation for their meditation, according to the direction of the Master of Novices, after the method of the Exercises, or some other like it. The visit to the Blessed Sacrament, in the domestic chapel, which is now customary before mental prayer in religious houses, was not introduced into the novitiate at that time.

The next hour was spent in prayer, mental or vocal, or meditation, according to the capacity of each novice and the instruction of their Master. It was his business diligently to look after this, and see that each one was well trained in the kind of meditation or prayer, mental or vocal, which suited him, as in a means of the highest necessity for his attaining the end of the Institute. After prayer, there was another half hour, during which the novices arranged [illegible] rooms, and noted down anything in their prayer [illegible] was worthy of preservation, examining them- [illegible] the same time how they had conducted

themselves in it, thanking God for any fruit they might have gained, remarking also any defects into which they might have fallen, and making resolutions to amend them. Then followed Mass, which was succeeded every other day by a lesson, or spiritual exhortation, from the Master of Novices, chiefly on the rules of the Institute, or other subjects connected with it. This exhortation lasted half an hour, after which another half hour was spent by the novices, broken up into parties of three or four, in going over among themselves what had been said, or discussing some other kindred subject which was set them by the Master, who, according to the rule of St. Francis Borgia, was to be present at the time. On the alternate days the time of the exhortation was to be spent in 'conferences, or collations,' as to the practical carrying out of what had been taught the day before. These were not to be merely intellectual exercises, and great care was to be taken as to simplicity, humility, and all that may conduce to spiritual advancement. Some one was to put the question, for instance, how this or that difficulty which might arise in the matters talked of the day before might be overcome, or how this or that mischief might arise, and how it might be remedied. Some of the novices were to give their opinion, and then the Master was to say what was to be held and what was to be done.

The dinner, or mid-day meal, came early in those days and in those countries, and there could not have been any great space of time left, after the exhortation and conference, to be filled up. Dinner was always preceded by the examination of conscience, and the novices were also to spend a quarter of an hour in attending to the little duties in the house which each one had to discharge, or in some manual labour which the Master was to set them: 'writing, for example,' says the regulation, 'that they may learn to improve therein,' or something else, according to the capacity of each. Two things, moreover, were to be 'exercised' before dinner: the memory, in order to which they were to learn something every day by heart out of the Rules or the Catechism, or something else set them by the Master; and the body, in order to the better maintenance of health.

Dinner was taken by the community in two divisions, at the 'first' and 'second' table, one immediately after the other, and after dinner there was an hour's recreation or conversation for all, till the bell rang one hour after the end of each table. Then the novices went to their cells, unless occupied in some duties elsewhere, to read or write, recite Vespers and Compline, or do anything else that the Master set them. This was, therefore, almost their first time in the day, except when at prayer, to be alone. After

an hour thus spent, they again assembled, to say by heart, one to another, what they had committed to memory in the morning, and after this there were to be on alternate days 'tones'—very short sermons—preached as an exercise, by one novice after another in turn, or an explanation of the Catechism, in order that they might be taught how to teach it. Some one was to ask questions, and the others to answer him, some 'conferences' also being held on the matter of the teaching. After two hours, they were again to return to their offices or manual labours. Before supper, the last hour was to be divided between exercise and any occupation which the Master might set to each, and to be preceded by another half hour of mental or vocal prayer. Supper was followed by another hour of recreation, after which they might spend a quarter of an hour in reciting Office or the Rosary, and the Master of Novices might take that time, as well as other spare times in the day, for seeing his pupils privately, letting them give an account of themselves to him and open their hearts to him, to encourage them in which he was to be careful to be full of kindness and paternal interest in their progress. The last thing before retiring to rest was the examination of conscience.

Such was the daily routine of the house at Sant' Andrea, where St. Stanislaus spent the few re-

maining months of his life in the company of the many distinguished men or youths who have been enumerated in the foregoing chapter. The incidents of his novitiate—a term the happiness of which is not impaired by its monotony and uneventfulness—are not many. Not long after his entrance he received an angry letter from his father, which he had to answer. Parents in the position of John Kostka may easily be pardoned if on such occasions they speak or write in a manner not quite consistent with the faith which they profess, as to the supreme dominion of God over His creatures, and the dignity and blessedness of the religious vocation. The topics of the letter seem to have been the usual commonplaces on such occasions. The nobility of the house of Kostka had been disgraced because Stanislaus had been seen in Germany and Italy in the habit of a beggar. His father would come to Rome to claim him, and take him back to Poland. He would find no collars of gold there, but gyves for his feet and chains for his hands, and he would be shut up in perpetual confinement, far from the company of friends and kinsfolk. He had better come to his senses, and give up of his own accord what he would otherwise have to abandon perforce.

Stanislaus wrote sweetly and gently in reply. Why should his father be so much afflicted at his entrance

into the Society of Jesus? Parents could wish nothing better for their children than to see them enter the households of the great people of the world, who might yet die, and so leave them without support. How much more glad ought John Kostka to be that his son had given himself entirely to God, Who would never fail him, and Who could, in this life and in the next, most faithfully recompense even the least service rendered to Him! However, his father was not to hope that he could ever give up his resolution. He had bound himself already to God by the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, and there was no evil, no torment, no death, that he would not readily accept rather than give up the state of life which he had chosen. (The vows which he had taken must have been vows of devotion only.) His father would show truly how much he loved him if he had prayed to God to bless his holy resolutions, and to give him grace to persevere therein unto death, that the end of his course might worthily answer to the beginning. By doing this, John Kostka would acquire great merit before God, and his son would be eternally bound to him by the dearest ties of gratitude.

After a few days, Stanislaus had another intimation of the state of mind in which his father was. One of his fellow-students at Vienna, a noble Pole like

himself, Nicolas Lassoicki, came to Rome to enter the German College, and visited Stanislaus at the novitiate. He had passed by Helsberg, and seen Cardinal Hosius, who had received a letter from John Kostka full of anger, and breathing resentment and threats of revenge. Stanislaus only answered by saying that his father would certainly write in another style if he could see his heart, and understand the joy with which it overflowed, and the immense benefits which God had bestowed upon him in his religious vocation. And when the former letter, mentioning the chains with which he was threatened, was read in the presence of one of his companions, he said that he was not worthy of bearing such chains for the love of God, but that his father only wrote as he did because he was not in Rome. John Kostka seems to have given up the idea of coming himself in pursuit of the fugitive; but he sent Paul to Rome after Stanislaus, whom, however, he found already dead. We shall speak hereafter of this visit of Paul.

The noviceship of Stanislaus lasted for not quite ten months, and as has been said already, it was not unlike that of other novices in the quiet unbroken tenor of its holy monotony. What alone distinguishes it from the ordinary course of a Jesuit novice, is the perfection with which its duties were discharged, and the fragrance of exquisite sanctity which it left

behind it in the minds of those who were the companions of the Saint and the witnesses of his daily actions. A large number of these were examined in the course of the 'processes' which were instituted in order to bring about his canonization, and our ideas of the character of his sanctity must be entirely derived from them. The most important of these witnesses, as having had, at the time, the greatest experience in spiritual matters, and also as having been the Master of Novices, whose office it was closely to watch the progress of the holy youth, and to be his confessor and the chosen confidant of his inmost thoughts, is Father Julio Fazio, whose deposition is to be found in the Process compiled at Coimbra, and who also wrote the Life of Stanislaus. After speaking in general of the exemplary virtue which made Stanislaus a model of self-restraint and obedience even to the advanced religious, Father Fazio remarks on the exactness with which he kept the rules, on the prudence and reasonableness which guided all his actions, on the readiness of his obedience, even when he was ordered to do things which were in themselves difficult and repugnant to nature. He says that he used to call Stanislaus omnipotent, because no order could be given him, however difficult, which he was not ready at once to execute without the slightest interior thought or

inclination to the contrary. The exactness of his obedience was attested afterwards by Claudio Aquaviva, who used to relate how he had been the companion of Stanislaus at a time when they were both put under the orders of the cook, who bade them move a quantity of logs of firewood from one place to another, so many at a time, and how he had himself found that he could carry more than the appointed number, and did so, whereas Stanislaus smiled, and said that to be quite obedient he would not add a single stick to his burden each time.

Father Fazio next speaks of his great sweetness and meekness in conversation: that he was never heard to say a single word that was offensive or bitter in any way. At the same time he was very considerate in speech, thinking twice before he spoke. John Pelezio, who lived at this time in great intimacy with him, bore witness that he had never heard him utter a single vain or idle word. His gravity and affability were equally remarkable, his countenance was always calm and open, his look bright, joyous, and modest. Others speak of the air of purity which seemed to breathe from his face, as if even his fresh beauty had something of a gift of inspiring those who looked on him with the love of the angelical virtue. All agree that his conversation had a wonderful charm, as well as a singular

maturity of judgment, and all were eager and delighted when they were allotted to him as companions, on account of the beautiful winning way in which he spoke of the things of God. 'His talk,' says Father Fazio, 'was full of fire, and showed the spirit of charity which burned in his heart, which roused all who listened to him to fervour, and produced in them the fruits of tender piety and devotion. He had a dexterous way of his own of turning off all worldly or useless conversation, and used instead gracefully to introduce some miracle of our Lady, or some remarkable action of the saints.' Our Lady, and the wonderful grace of the religious vocation, formed the two favourite subjects of his conversation.

The same Father notices also the great progress which Stanislaus had made in the spirit of mortification and his love for the practice of penance. He had taught himself to hate all that could give pleasure to the flesh, and eagerly to embrace all that afflicted it. Hence he had a great desire to take upon himself the losses and sufferings of others, to suffer for Christ, as the martyrs suffered, torments and death. As for exterior mortifications and penances, he practised them as far as he was allowed by obedience, which was obliged to restrain his fervour.

There are many evidences of his very great confidence in prayer. Three things are particularly noted of him in the way of extraordinary fervour in prayer which may be taken as indicating his own great devotion to that holy exercise as well as the special grace bestowed upon him therein. The first of these was the gift of being able to pray without any distraction. His possession of this rare gift was attested by Father Alfonso Ruiz, who was for a short time his Master of Novices while he was at the Gesù; and Stanislaus himself told Stephen Augusti, whom he found one day melancholy and low-spirited on account of the distractions which seemed to him to prevent him from making his prayer, that he did not know what distraction was, as he always felt a loving affection to God and to His Blessed Mother and the Saints, and, even while engaged in external things, had his mind always raised towards God. Others declared that all the time which he did not spend in sleep was full of the thought and the love of God; and Father Mairhofer relates that he usually kept his eyes down, but that he raised them from time to time towards heaven with a deep sigh, and that sometimes he was seen going about the house like a person who had lost his way and was entirely absorbed in God, without noticing at

all outward things and what went on all around him.

This leads us on to the second of the marvellous gifts which resulted, as it appears, from his close union with God. This consisted in the gift of tears and in a kind of splendour which sometimes beamed from him in the time of prayer. Cardinal Bellarmine mentions in one of his ascetical works[1] that copious tears used to flow from his eyes. His eyes, indeed, were noticed as suffused with tears at other times as well as at the time of prayer. His face glowed also with marvellous light. Father Antonio de Madrid bears witness that he spoke little and then of spiritual things, and that he went about his ordinary occupations muttering to himself as if he was still praying. Antonio was told by the Infirmarian to give Stanislaus a draught after he had finished his prayer, and when he went to him he found his face shining, with certain rosy streaks upon it, which seemed like the effects of ointment, but his face remained with the same light upon it after he had washed it. Rays of light were often seen to come from him when he was praying. The last marvellous effect which need be mentioned was that mentioned by St. Francis de Sales in his book on the love of God, namely, that St. Stanislaus was

[1] *De Gemitu Columbæ* (Dedic Ep.).

so violently assailed by the love of our Saviour as often to faint and suffer spasms in consequence, and that he was obliged to apply cloths dipped in cold water to his breast in order to temper the violence of the love which he felt.[2] One day he was found by his Superior walking alone and out of his usual hours in the garden of the novitiate, at a time when a very cold wind was blowing, and being asked what he was doing there, he replied that he had gone out to get a little refreshment, as he felt his heart all on fire after his prayer was over. Stephen Augusti, who has been already mentioned, bore witness to the need that he had to apply cold wet cloths to his breast. The same fact is mentioned by a number of other witnesses: Father Antonio de Madrid, Father Julio Fazio, and several more.

When it has been said that Stanislaus was so powerfully attracted to the most intense love of God as to be in a certain sense the victim of his own ardent affections, it is natural to expect that the next thing which has to be told of him is that he was most tenderly devoted to our Blessed Lady. We have already seen that from his earliest youth his heart had been in a special manner consecrated to the love of Mary, and how the gracious Mother

[2] *Love of God*, p. 1, lib. 6, c. ult.

of God had requited the affection of her child by special favours at Vienna, among which was the command to enter the Society of her Son. It is almost superfluous to add that this love of Stanislaus for her whom he spoke of in the tenderest manner as his own mother went on increasing when he was in the novitiate. He had made a practice of collecting anecdotes concerning our Lady, which he would relate to his companions in their walks about the city: and when at Sant' Andrea, which is at no great distance from the most famous shrine of our Lady at Rome, where the ancient picture said to have been painted by St. Luke is preserved in the Borghese chapel at S. Maria Maggiore, he got the custom introduced among the novices of turning towards that basilica the first thing at morning and the last at night, to ask a mother's blessing from the Madonna.

Very few anecdotes of the novitiate of Stanislaus seem to have been preserved: the days in which he lived and died were days when such memories were not thought of so much importance as in our own. We have already mentioned Claudio Aquaviva and the firelogs. Another day, Cardinal Commendone, on his return from Germany, came to visit the young novice at Sant' Andrea, moved, apparently, by what he knew about him from his father's letter.

Stanislaus was at the moment occupied in some servile work, and had on a torn and shabby dress fit for the purpose. He was eager to go to his visitor in this dress, in order to humble himself the more, but the Superiors insisted upon his appearing in more honourable attire. This was an instance of his great love for humiliation and mortification; a love which he showed on all occasions. Thus, for instance, whenever mention was made of his noble birth and high station in the world, he would manage at once to turn the conversation in another direction. Equally great was his love for the Institute. He had the rules given him to study, and in a few days he had copied them out, and, as Bartoli says, much more had he stamped them on his mind and heart. He carried the copy always in his bosom, and in Bartoli's time it still existed.[3]

Another relic of this kind consists of a manuscript of notes on the Spiritual Exercises in the handwriting of Stanislaus. He made the Exercises, as is usual with all novices, soon after his entrance at Sant' Andrea. Claudio Aquaviva, his senior in the noviceship by a few months, was appointed to be his director in the Exercises; but he soon found that his pupil was far more fitted to be his teacher in the matter of

[3] Father Boero mentions it among a number of the manuscripts of the Saint which were preserved in the Church of the Society of Jesus at Cracow.

mental prayer. The manuscript of which we speak is dated November 7, 1667, and we gather from it that the Exercises, as given to him, did not go beyond the first week and part of the second. There are eight Exercises in all, including the Foundation, so that it seems likely that a day was given to each subject. The order of the Exercises is followed, except that two meditations, on Death and on Judgment, are inserted before the meditation on Hell. These two are written out at full length, apparently just because they are not to be found in the Exercises. They are full of thought, and it may be remarked that in each there is a strain of joy. One of the points in the meditation on Death is on the joy which the just will feel on account of what they may have done or suffered for God, and on account of the deliverance of their soul from its earthly prison; and the ending of the whole meditation is to be the use of the verses, *Beati mortui qui in Domino moriuntur*, or *Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontem aquarum*, &c. And one of the points in the meditation on the Judgment is, in like manner, the joy of the good at their reward. We cannot, however, be sure that these meditations belong to Stanislaus himself. It is probable that the points were suggested to him by Aquaviva, and that the full working out is his own.

CHAPTER IX.

Last illness and death.

It appears that the Fathers and Superiors of the Society, who had the management of Stanislaus and his brother novices, were well aware of what a treasure of sanctity they possessed in that holy youth. His simplicity and openness made him very dear to all, and as soon as he was known his angelical perfection was understood. There may have been many conjectures as to what might be the future of a soul already, at the very dawn of its early manhood, so richly endowed by grace. We do not, however, read of St. Stanislaus as of other youthful saints, that he was full of the holy ambition of spending himself in the heroic labours of charity which were already familiar to the children of the Society; of those yearnings for India, or Japan, or South America, the schools of self-devotion and martyrdom which had been, as it were, so lately opened by St. Francis Xavier and the glorious band of missionaries who followed in his footsteps. No doubt prospects of

that kind were often set before the novices at Sant' Andrea, whether the labours which were to be so nobly carried on were to be devoted to the regaining the lost ground of the Church in Europe, or to the extension of her gentle sway to countries hitherto heathen by way of compensation for the apostacy of so many Christian kingdoms at home. If we could imagine for ourselves the career which that happy band of novices would aspire to, we have but to call to mind the various fields of labour in which so many of them afterwards became famous. But the motto, as it were, of the sanctity of Stanislaus is the remembrance of eternity, the worthlessness and transitoriness of all earthly things, the desire to be with and to possess God. The Church has struck the keynote of the part which that blessed soul bears in the harmonies of the heavenly kingdom when she bids us pray, in the collect for his feast, that, after his example, we may urgently redeem the time by good works, and so make haste to enter into the everlasting rest.[1]

The effects produced upon his young body by his extreme devotion and the raptures which resulted from it, made his health an object of care to the fathers. There was in the noviceship the good Father

[1] Tempus instanter operando redimentes, in æternam requiem ingredi festinemus.

Augustin Mazzino, who had been a physician before he entered the Society, and he was specially charged by the superiors to watch the health of Stanislaus, and provide him with restoratives whenever he needed them. This was particularly during the summer months of the year, which was the last of his life, while he was at Sant' Andrea. At this date, the fainting fits which he suffered from time to time became more frequent and more violent; but we are not told that it entered into the thoughts of any to whom he was so dear to anticipate that he would soon have to be surrendered to heaven. The extreme heats of the latter half of July do not seem to have hurt him. When August began, he had to be present at an exhortation given at the noviceship by his former friend, Father Peter Canisius, who had come to Rome in the course of the summer in company with Cardinal Truchses, Bishop of Augsburg, at the bidding of Pius V., who wished to consult them about the critical state of religious affairs in Germany. Canisius would no doubt have been glad to see again the young Polish noble, with whose admission into the Society he had had so much to do, and it is unlikely that he would have left Sant' Andrea without asking to talk with the novice who was so much spoken of even among the older and most experienced fathers in Rome. On the occasion of which

we are speaking, he took for the text of his address a common Roman proverb, *Ferrare Agosto*—'Give August a jovial welcome'; a saying which may have come down from time immemorial, and have been connected with the pagan custom of feasting and riotous enjoyment at the beginning of the month which is the most deadly of all in the Roman climate. Canisius turned the proverb into a text which enabled him to speak of the manner in which a religious man ought to spend month after month without ever relaxing the fervour of his spirit, always beginning, and never waxing faint or weary, and he gave, as a means by which this ever fresh fervour might be secured, the practice of beginning each month under the supposition that it was to be the last, and thus providing for the greatest possible purity of intention and perfection in the manner in which daily actions were performed.

After the exhortation came the 'collation,' or conference among the novices themselves, when they spoke about the impression which each had received, and what had seemed to each particularly noticeable in the exhortation. When it came to the turn of Stanislaus to speak, he said that what Father Peter had said might well be taken by every one there as an admonition from a holy man, but that for him it was the express voice of God, because he was

to die in that month which was now beginning. He was well and vigorous at the time, and no one took much account of what he said till it came true. A few days after came the beautiful feast of our Lady of the Snow, which is kept with particular solemnity at Sta. Maria Maggiore, the Basilica which was founded by the Roman patrician and his wife, who desired to know how they might best spend the fortune which, having no children, they wished to bequeath to our Lady, and were told to raise a church in her honour in the Esquiline on the spot which they would find covered with snow. The festival is in the calendar of the Universal Church, and the shower of jasmin leaves which falls during Vespers from the dome of the chapel in which the picture of our Lady by St. Luke is preserved still keeps up, in a touching and picturesque manner, the memory of the miracle. Here was the shrine where St. Ignatius had said his first Mass, and it had no doubt a particular attraction for his spiritual children on that account, as well as from their burning devotion to the Blessed Mother of God in whose honour it had been raised.

To Sta. Maria Maggiore, therefore, as we are told, Stanislaus went on the day of the feast, the 5th of August, as companion to Father Emmanuel de Sa, a man of great learning and piety, who seems to have

been fond of the holy novice, and to have delighted in getting him to talk about the Madonna. Father Emmanuel asked Stanislaus what he thought about the Assumption of our Blessed Lady, a feast which was to be kept ten days later in the same Basilica. 'What can I say about that, father?' said Stanislaus. 'Well, I think God created a new glory for His Mother, and that all the saints did reverence to her, and professed themselves her subjects when she entered Paradise. And I hope,' he added, 'that I shall be up there myself to enjoy this feast that is coming.' The father thought that he was speaking of being present in heaven in spirit to contemplate the glories of the feast above. And so this, like the former prediction about his approaching death, went unnoticed at the time.

What was passing, meanwhile, in the secret heart of this tenderly devoted child of Mary, came to be in part known a few days after, on the feast of St. Laurence. Francis Borgia, as we are told by Bartoli, had introduced into the Society a devout practice which had been customary in his own princely household while he was yet Duke of Gandia —a household which in many respects was more like a religious community than the court of a worldly magnate. This custom, which is now well known among Catholics everywhere, consisted in each person

drawing by lot at the beginning of each year a patron saint, whom he was bound to consider as a special protector during the year, to have recourse to him in all needs, to honour him by the imitation of some virtue which the devout reading of his life might suggest, to prepare for the celebration of his feast by certain mortifications, and then, on the feast day itself, devoutly to receive Holy Communion in his honour. The Society had altered the practice so far as to put the drawing of the saints by lot at the beginning of each month instead of that of each year. At the beginning of August, Stanislaus had drawn the name of the glorious martyr, St. Laurence, and he presented to his superiors a long list of penances and devotions which he asked leave to practice in honour of the saint, only a part of which it was thought prudent to allow him. He was permitted to take the discipline in public on the eve of the feast of St. Laurence, and on the following morning it is said that he went to communion with a letter on his heart which was addressed to our Blessed Lady, the Queen of Angels, humbly beseeching her to obtain for him the favour of being in heaven on the approaching feast of her Assumption, that he might there see the glorious solemnity of her entrance and reception into the kingdom of her Son, and that he entreated St. Laurence to present his

petition to his dear Mother, and to add to its prayer the weight of his own intercession. Perhaps he remembered how St. Laurence had himself remonstrated with St. Xystus, the Pope, whose deacon he was, for going to martyrdom and to heaven without him, and how the holy Pope had promised him that, three days later than himself, he should share the same crown. The rest of the morning of that day Stanislaus spent in the kitchen, washing the dishes, and meditating, as he told Father Fazio, his Master of Novices, on the fire of hell represented to him by the fire before his eyes, as well as on the fire in which the blessed martyr was tortured.

The day did not come to an end before he felt himself ill. The fellow-novice who took him to rest remembered afterwards that he told him he should die in a few days. But he had very little fear, though his pulse was fluttering. Claudius Aquaviva went to visit him, as well as Father Fazio, and to each he said that as he had asked for the favour above named, for the feast of the Assumption by the intercession of St. Laurence, he now hoped that the request had been granted him. This was on the Wednesday evening. On the Thursday and Friday evening he remained slightly ill, and on the Friday evening, as he seemed to have a slight touch of tertian fever, he was removed from the room in

which he usually slept to a more convenient place in a higher storey of the little house. Many of his fellow-novices accompanied him, and noted that before he lay down on his bed, he knelt on the floor and prayed awhile, and then made the sign of the cross over the bed, saying, 'This is my last illness, and I shall rise no more from this bed.' His companions were troubled and alarmed, so Stanislaus added at once, 'If, at least, it so please God.' Here he remained without much change till the Sunday morning, August 14. That day he told a lay-brother who was waiting upon him that he should die the next night. The other smiled. 'Need would be of a greater miracle,' he said, 'to die of so trifling a matter, than to be cured of it—if, indeed, it be not that our Blessed Lady wishes you to be present in heaven at the solemnity of her Assumption.'

Midday on Sunday had already passed before the quiet noviceship was thrown into alarm by the really serious symptoms which manifested themselves in Stanislaus. A deadly faint seized him, and he seemed to lose all strength. Father Fazio, the Master of Novices, was by his side in a moment, and brought him to himself by the use of restoratives. 'O man of little heart!' said he, jokingly, for Stanislaus was already as bright and calm as ever—'Do you lose courage for so slight a matter?' 'A man of little

heart I am,' said Stanislaus, 'but the matter is not slight, since I must die of it.'

Not long after this, other very dangerous symptoms came on, and it was manifest that he was dying. At nightfall he made his confession and received the Holy Viaticum, his fellow-novices being collected around him, weeping, both at seeing the wonderful devotion which he showed, and also because they now knew that they were to lose one so dear to them. He asked pardon of all with great humility, and then received our Divine Lord with a countenance so full of love and fervour as to melt the hearts of all those present. Then came Extreme Unction, to the prayers of which he made the responses himself, following every part of the holy rite with intense reverence. After this last Sacrament, he again made his confession in order to gain the indulgence allowed at the point of death. This over, he talked for a little time cheerfully and with a smile on his face to the friends around him, answering their questions affectionately and calmly, and then, as it were, turning away his eyes and his heart to heaven. A Father had come from the Gesù —it was probably Alfonso Ruiz, who had been his Master while he was in that house—and remained with him, in company with Father Fazio and another priest. A few sayings and anecdotes are all that

remain to us to help us to paint to ourselves the quiet hours as they passed on, bringing death every moment nearer and nearer. Father Ruiz asked him about his rosary, which he held still in his hand, though he was no longer able to recite the prayers. 'It belongs to my blessed Mother,' said the dying youth. 'Courage,' said the Father, 'for you will soon be in your Mother's presence and be able to kiss her hands.' The words sent a thrill of joy through his frame, and he raised his hands and eyes to heaven in intense thanksgiving. Again and again he kissed the medal which hung at the end of the Father's rosary as he knelt by his side, as well as a little picture of our Lady which was always before him. He was asked if he had anything on his mind which gave him trouble, and he replied that there was nothing: he had placed all his confidence in the mercy of God, and for the rest was entirely resigned to His will. Again and again he repeated the words of the Psalm, 'My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready!'

He made his confession again more than once, either at the suggestion of Father Fazio, or of his own accord. He asked after his brother novices, and was told they had all been told to go to bed, so he begged that each one might be greeted in his name, and be asked to forgive him for all the

bad example he had given them. 'The time is short'—*Tempus breve est*, he said to Father Fazio. 'Yes,' said the other, *reliquum est*, 'it remains'—and Stanislaus added, '*ut præparemus nos*'—for us to make ourselves ready.' Then they began to recite prayers for the dying—the *Adoramus te Christe* and the prayer of St. Innocent, *Deus qui pro redemptione mundi voluisti nasci*, and the rest, in which the whole of our Lord's Passion is summed up in brief. Stanislaus, with the crucifix in his hand, followed all with great fervour. They asked him if the repetition of the prayers fatigued him, or if he felt weary at waiting so long for death; but he answered that he was full of consolation. After a time, not to tire him, they stopped praying aloud; and then he began himself with some prayers of Dionysius the Carthusian, which he was in the habit of saying, and broke out into great expressions of thankfulness to God for all the benefits he had received from Him, especially those of redemption and creation, and he prayed Him to blot out all his faults and receive his soul in peace. Then he kissed most tenderly the sacred wounds of the feet and hands and side on his crucifix, and leant his head forward on the crown of thorns. He got them to bring him a little book which he kept, in which he had written the names of the saints whom it

had fallen to his lot to have to reverence specially month after month, and he begged the bystanders to commend him to these his protectors.

Stanislaus had begged from the very beginning of the dangerous crisis in which he now was that he might be laid upon the bare ground, so as to die as a penitent. His request was refused almost up to the last; but he renewed it again, and he was at last placed on the ground, with a small pallet under him. There he lay till long after midnight on the Sunday: the day of the Assumption of his blessed Mother found him still on earth. The Novice-master, Father Fazio, Father Alfonso Ruiz, who, as has been said, had been his master while at the Gesù, with Father Warscewiski, who was the first to write his life, and others, knelt beside him. One more change came over him as the silent hours, broken only by prayers and sobs, flowed on towards the early dawn. He ceased from praying, and a wonderful gleam of joy came over his face. He looked around here and there, and seemed to be inviting his companions to join him in showing reverence to some great and holy person whom he saw present. Father Ruiz bent down to him, and the simple, obedient youth told him what it was that he seemed to see. The secret was divulged after his death. The Blessed Virgin appeared to

him in that last hour as she had appeared to him in his perilous sickness at Vienna. Then she had bidden him enter the Society of her Son on earth, and now she came to welcome him to it in heaven. She was accompanied by a band of holy virgins, and they seemed to speak to him and he to them. The vision passed away only with his life: the ineffably happy smile which the sight of Mary had called to his lips was still there as he breathed his last, and even remained on his face as it calmed down into the tranquillity of death. It was soon after three o'clock in the morning of the feast of the Assumption. The actual moment of death was hardly discernible. Stanislaus lay with his rosary in one hand, a blessed candle in the other, 'as a protestation of faith.' The fathers asked one another by their looks whether he was gone. It was known that it was so by a simple test. The picture of our Lady always made him smile and light up afresh; but it was now placed before his eyes, and no change could be noted. His soul was in heaven with our Lady herself.

CHAPTER X.

Honour after death.

THOSE whose lot it has been to dwell for a time in Rome—before the beginning of that reign of profanity, licentiousness, and infidelity to which it has now been subject for nearly five years—may remember instances of a phenomenon which may indeed happen in any city with a thoroughly Catholic population, but what seems particularly at home in the central city of the Christian world. Some one dies in the odour of sanctity. It may be some venerable father of a religious order, or a poor lay-brother among the friars of St. Francis, or a devoted parish priest, or a student in some seminary, or a noble lady noted for her charities, or one of those many *anime sante* who may be said almost to form a class by themselves in such a population. Perhaps comparatively few have ever heard of the person while alive: his or her life may have been hidden with God, and even its external aspects, its mortifications and deeds of zeal or charity may somehow

have escaped notice, though they were done in the light of day. But as soon as the soul has quitted the body, all around seem suddenly to wake up to the knowledge that a saint has been among them. The body is placed on a bier in a church, for the short interval which must pass before it can be consigned to the grave, and no one knows how the tidings spread through the city which gather a large proportion of the population around the mortal remains of one whom they have hardly known when alive. Rich and poor, ecclesiastics and lay people, the Roman princes and princesses, as well as crowds of the Monticiani and Trasteverini, all are there, pressing around the bier to touch or kiss the hands and feet of the dead, or if that is not allowed them, to hand rosaries or medals to the guardians of the corpse who keep them at bay, that these at least may touch what they consider the mortal remains of a saint. If the deceased person has had a great reputation for holiness, it is hard if there are not one or two sick persons, cripples, blind, or the like, who are brought into the church to gain the benefit of his intercession, and sometimes the gladsome shout of '*miracolo, miracolo!*' is heard through the throng. But even in cases where the faith of the people has not been kindled to such an extent as this, it is certainly a wonderful and a

very consoling sight to see how the spirit of devotion and piety animates the whole multitude, and how readily the belief in the glorious reward and supernatural powers of the servants of God bursts forth the moment that they are dead.

Stanislaus Kostka had not finished his eighteenth year when he died in the Novitiate of Sant' Andrea, he had not been in Rome ten months, and during that short time he had lived in all the seclusion and obscurity of a novice in a religious house. The novices used, no doubt, to walk about the city at certain times, to visit the churches and shrines, and those few who chanced to know him by sight may have learnt who the heavenly-looking youth was whose face beamed with so pure a beauty as to attract all who saw it. There was something about him which charmed every one. 'He was of middle stature,' says his last biographer, 'his hair black, his face round, his body well-proportioned and robust, his appearance fair and pleasing, his complexion white but tinted with a virginal blush, his eyes remarkably fine, but also wonderfully modest and bashful, breathing devotion and angelical purity.' His story may have got about, as it was known to Cardinals and prelates from Germany, as well as to the good Fathers at the Gesù. But after all he had little claim to public notice, except from the sweet

and undefinable fragrance of his sanctity. So, however, it was, as soon as his death was known, his funeral became a triumph. The news spread through the house as the novices woke up to their early prayer, and when they came to see him lying on his pallet, as if he were asleep, with no marks of death about him save its motionlessness, the tender sorrow which they felt at the loss of so beloved a brother was changed into ineffable consolation and joy. He was the first to die in that holy house, from which so many saintly souls were to be sent forth on so many different errands of charity for the glory of God, and it was felt that God had given the noviceship a saint for its foundation-stone.

The other Jesuit houses in Rome, the Gesù and the Roman College, soon received the news, and fathers and brothers came at once to visit the body. A certain Father Ottelli, a man of holy life, who had heard of the illness of Stanislaus the day before and determined to visit him as soon as possible, seemed to himself that morning, 'as he lay between sleeping and waking,' to set out from the noviceship on his errand of charity, and to be met by a lay-brother who told him, when he said whither he was going, that he was wasting his time, for Stanislaus was already in heaven. This happened to him at the Gesù just at the time, as he afterwards found, when

Stanislaus breathed his last. During the day, as has been said, many of the Fathers and others visited the remains of Stanislaus, and they found there so great a crowd of people anxious to kiss the hands and feet of the holy youth, that one of them, Francis Toledo, afterwards Cardinal, whose name still lives as one of the great commentators on Scripture of the time, said to his companion that old men like themselves might die unnoticed, but here was a young Pole who drew all the world round his bier. It would have been against the humility and modesty which guided the counsels of the Society to make a great display at his funeral, but Francis Borgia, after the usual rites, ordered the body of Stanislaus to be put into a coffin—even this was a singular honour in those days—and buried at the right hand of the high altar of the church. Flowers were strewn over the body before it was interred, and these, as well as pieces of his habit and beads from his rosary, were eagerly sought for as relics.

As time went on, the secrets of his short but wonderful life came out, one by one, which he had told his confessors either before or at his death —the manner, in particular, in which the Blessed Mother of God had favoured him at Vienna and when he was in his agony, and how St. Barbara had procured for him the grace of Holy Com-

munion when he lay in the house of Kimberker. Very soon two lives of him appeared. Father Fazio wrote one in Italian, Father Warscewiski, himself a Pole, wrote one in Polish, and it is probably to this life that we are to attribute the rapid and wonderful development of devotion to him in his own country. But, in truth, the belief in his holiness seems to have spread no one can tell how. In a year or two Rome was full of it as well as Poland. The novices, in particular, honoured him as far as was allowed them, and when two years after his death another novice died, and the grave was opened, they petitioned to have the head of Stanislaus placed in their own oratory. Rodolf Aquaviva, who was himself to be a martyr in India, presented the petition, and it was granted. The body was then found entirely incorrupt. Probably the severance of the head was followed by the decay of the rest of the body, for some years later, when the grave was again opened, only bones were found, which were put into a leaden coffin in a more honourable place. There is a characteristic story of this translation which deserves mention, resting upon the evidence of one who was an eye-witness of it. When the bones of Stanislaus were put into their new case, the sacristan of the Gesù piously abstracted one of the bones of the spine, and took it off to his

own church. Suddenly, however, the presence of something marvellous made itself felt. The Church and House of the Gesù were in part filled with an unusual fragrance, but the sacristy was more fragrant than either. What had happened? The poor sacristan had to come forward, like the woman whose issue of blood had been cured by her furtive touch of our Lord's garment, and confess what he had done. Claudius Aquaviva, the former fellow-novice of Stanislaus, was then General, and he made the good man attest what had happened on oath, and take back the relic at once to Sant' Andrea. The marvellous fragrance at the Gesù immediately ceased. The same fragrance was perceived by many at the tomb of the saint. But before we speak of the way in which the devotion to Stanislaus spread, until it issued in his canonization, it is right to turn back to his influence upon one who was very dear to him, and who has already been named as having had much to do with his vocation—his own brother Paul.

CHAPTER XI.

Paul Kostka.

THE sudden disappearance of Stanislaus from Vienna, and the letter which he had left behind for his brother, had given a rough shake to that haughty young nobleman. He felt, perhaps for the first time, how shameful and cruel his conduct had been. As we have seen, however, this remorse could not have been very profound; nor did it deter him from giving chase to the fugitive. The plainly miraculous intervention, which stayed the carriage horses in their pursuit, must have startled a conscience not altogether hardened or deadened by passion. But when Paul returned to Masovia he readily caught the temper of his father, and willingly started for Rome, where the violent letter of John Kostka had already preceded him, to bring back Stanislaus, at all cost, to Poland.

But his saintly brother had been safe in heaven a whole month before Paul arrived. The city was full of the holiness of the Polish novice who had just died at the new Jesuit Novitiate. Everyone was talking

about the story of his life, his courageous flight, the marvels that surrounded his death. Saul had come 'breathing out threatenings;' he was converted into a true Paul. The whole of his views had undergone a strange change. He went to the lately-closed tomb and cried there like a child, and then hurried back to his home. He told his family all that he had heard. The heart of the old Castellan softened; and but one sentiment, that of deep joy and gratitude, penetrated the household of Kostka: they all felt that for an earthly relative whom they had lost, they had obtained a saint for a brother.

A year later Father Warscewiski's Life of S. Stanislaus appeared, with another, in Latin verse, by Dr. Gregory Samboritano, Master of Philosophy in the University of Cracow, and Poland learnt that it had been the parent to another saint. And then the devotion to the young novice spread so quickly that clergy and bishops alike spoke his praises openly in the pulpit: 'So small a boy, and so great a saint.' Then at last news came from Rome that Stanislaus had been declared 'Blessed,' and the name of Kostka took its place with those of Casimir and of Hyacinth. Pictures of the new *Beato* were placed in the churches, his statues were erected in the squares, and the precious *ex-votos* of silver and gold, hung at his altars, told the many

favours which he obtained for those who sought his aid. The earthly glory which redounded to his house was a striking answer to the narrow views and low standard by which Paul had judged the unworldly conduct of his brother; it showed clearly that there were greater measures of action than the judgment of the world, higher aims, grander rewards than could be gained by any service to man, by any condescension to public opinion. The prayers which a persecutor wins from his victim, after all, were the real secret of the completely new ideas which began to actuate the young nobleman.

Not so very long after, his father died. It was in the midst of a most severe winter. The nobles from the country round came to express their condolence, and Albert, the younger son—there were but two living—with true Polish politeness, at each fresh arrival left his warm corner by the stove to receive the visitor. He caught a severe cold, and was stricken down by so short an illness that his body was buried in the yet open tomb which had just received his father's remains. Albert had never been married, so that Paul was left the only male representative of his family. Naturally enough, he determined to get married. Several most suitable matches presented themselves; his youth, his fortune, his name and excellent Christian life, made it easy to

find a lady who would accept his hand. But God willed that it should not be so. Over and over again something came between him and the final conclusion; again and again he was disappointed. And so strange and unlooked for were these difficulties, that at last Paul recognised in them the loving Hand of Him Who wished him to ascend to a higher state. It was at no light cost that he followed the call, sacrificing the future of a family which must end with himself; and we may be sure that many of his aristocratic friends and kinsfolk had their word to say against his resolve. But his thoughts were no longer those of the world: he had the example of his blessed brother before him. He had learnt from Stanislaus to brave the sneers and unkind unchristian judgments of men, who had no thoughts higher than the flimsy, fleeting riches and position of earth.

Paul withdrew to his Castle of Kostkow, the birthplace of St. Stanislaus, and passed his days in prayer and good works with his widowed mother. Father Frederick Stombek, of the Society of Jesus, has left us, in his official examination before the Ecclesiastical Court of Cracow, a picture of this lady. 'The mother of our *Beato* was Margaret Kriska, a very holy lady, a very mirror of pious matrons, a person of few words, gifted with extraordinary devotion. Every

day she used to come from Kostkow, without fail, to the parish church of Prasnitz, about three miles off, to assist at the Holy Sacrifice in the handsome chapel which she had built, and to recommend to God the souls of her husband, John, and her son, Albert, who lie buried therein. Every morning, for an hour or two, shut up in her room, she gave herself up to the meditation of heavenly things, nor during that time did she allow any one to speak to her, not even her confessor, unless she herself opened the door. When at table she took a most scanty repast, and all the time was passed in silence, or listening to some pious discourse from her son Paul, the elder brother of Stanislaus, an exceedingly holy man, quite changed from what he was when young and at Vienna with his brother. All this I heard from two of our priests, each nearly seventy years old, who had been her confessors, namely, Father Peter Fabrizio, who was then Provincial, and here are his letters which he wrote to me on the subject, and Father John Ponnacki, once Rector of Jaroslaw.' The poor were not forgotten, but were her first and chief care, and her alms were lavish almost to a fault. Gentle and kind to all around her, she was severe and cruel only to herself. She always attributed the graces she received to the prayers of her Stanislaus, and she lived long enough to see him receive on earth the

honours of the beatified, and we are told he gladdened her last passage by his presence.

When Margaret died, Paul Kostka determined to give himself up still more closely and more completely to God. To Him did the penitent brother resolve to make an offering of his fortune. So at Prasnitz he built a new house and church for the Franciscans of the strict observance—Bernardines they were called in Poland. Then he erected a hospital on a princely scale, and near to it a College for the Fathers of the Society of Jesus. But the town was judged too small for it to be worth their while to accept it; and the pious founder converted it into a house of refuge for the poor of the neighbourhood. However, chancing to hear that the Jesuit College of Pultowa was looking out for a country house or *Villa* for the professors, he offered to them one of his estates, worth then about 12,000 florins. This they would not accept, and only after some discussion did he prevail on them to take it for half its real value. Paul had hardly concluded the bargain, when he reproached himself with having accepted the 6,000 florins, and pressed them to take back at least 1,500 florins as an endowment for poor scholars. He enlarged the principal church of Prasnitz, and doubled its former endowments, adding to it a splendid chantry, in which he prepared his tomb,

a large marble slab, with the simple and noble inscription, *Non erubesco Evangelium*—'I am not ashamed of the Gospel.'[1] His home was a small house joined on to the hospital, where his room was furnished in a manner suited to his rank, with a bed with handsome hangings. As is well known, in those days the bedroom was a usual place wherein to receive company; and as he had frequent visits from the nobility, out of respect to them he kept up this last remnant of his former state. But the only bed he ever used was the bare floor, or at best, when suffering from great fatigue, a piece of carpet or matting.

Rising about one in the morning, after but a few hours' rest, Paul used to recite the Matins from the Office of the day. Then he gave himself a cruel and protracted discipline, and spent the rest of the time till day-break in meditation, his favourite subject being the Life and Passion of our Lord. Then he went to the parish church, hearing and serving many Masses in succession, and when they were over he withdrew into some corner of the building to continue his devotions unseen. His knees became frightfully injured by such protracted prayer. The memory of St. Stanislaus prostrate on the pavement of the Church of the Society at Vienna taught Paul to imitate the

[1] Rom. i. 16.

same humble and painful position. 'When quite a child,' declared Laurtius Olzamoroski, a gentleman of Przemysl,[2] 'I saw in St. Anne's Church, a man of distinction, and of a venerable old age, lying prostrate before the altar, his arms extended, his face in the dust. This so astonished and edified me that it made me ask at once who he was, and was answered, that he was the illustrious Paul Kostka, brother to Blessed Stanislaus.' Over that altar there was exposed a picture of the Saint, and there he loved to pour out his thanks to Stanislaus for the graces he had obtained for him, and to weep over the cruel treatment of which he had been the guilty executioner.

The rest of the day was devoted to serving the sick in the hospital, and the poor in the refuge. Paul delighted in the most menial offices for their comfort, and gave large alms in addition to all who needed them. An old servant of his has left us on oath[3] an interesting sketch of this part of his master's life. 'At twelve years of age I was put into a situation as servant to the noble Paul Kostka, Blessed Stanislaus' brother. I was his companion in a great number of journeys, and I always saw and noticed in him a tenor of life so thoroughly devout and

[2] Proc. Presmilien, A.D. 1629, testis 34.
[3] Proc. Presmilien, A.D. 1629, testis 35.

holy, as to surprize and edify everybody. When at table, he never spoke except on spiritual subjects. He wore a rosary round his neck, plain for all to see. He used to dress in a quiet and humble way. He never missed making a visit to a single church on reaching town or castle. If on the road he came by the figure of the Crucifix on the way-side, he got down at once from the carriage, and kneeling before the image, prayed for a long time together. He was so attached to the Catholic Faith, that he never took any once into his service unless he had first by public declaration made a profession of Faith.' They were times when indifference had passed into such a fashion that the toleration of Poland has been praised by many writers, who would not approve such toleration now-a-days. Father Bartoli tells us that if ever, while travelling, he perforce missed his daily Mass, at the very next town at which he arrived the first thing he did was to seek out a church and the priest belonging to it, and then he would implore him, to open the door of the tabernacle so that he might have the consolation at least of gazing on the sacred ciborium. The moment he beheld it, he would throw himself prostrate on the ground in fervent adoration, and having remained some space in prayer, he would beg earnestly our Lord to bless him before he departed.

Amid all the external signs of devotion with which his countrymen strove to honour his brother, the magnificent processions, the splendid services at which the whole Court, the magistracy, the nobility attended, the lives that were printed, the panegyrics preached, there seems to have been one master feeling which prevailed in the breast of Paul Kostka. He could not hear Stanislaus' name mentioned without tears starting to his eyes. He could not bear to hear of him long together. A crushing sense of his injustice and cruelty towards Stanislaus seemed quite to unman him. When summoned in 1603 to give his valuable witness to the life of the Saint, just as when questioned on other occasions by several of the Fathers of the Society on the same subject, as has been already told, he cut the matter short, his words been broken by sighs and tears. Father Fabrizio, who as confessor to his mother, was very intimate with him, tried more than ever to draw from him some fresh details; but always in vain. Paul would give no other reply than, raising his eyes to heaven and clasping his hands together, 'Oh! may that Blessed soul pray for us!'[4] Other times he would try to turn the subject by saying: 'Why do you give up the other saints?' Every praise given to his brother seemed to him a reproof administered to his old tormenter.

[4] Father Frederic Stombek's evidence at Cracow, 1630.

'I heard often,' Father Nicolas Oborski tells us, 'from those who were intimate with Paul that he always grieved deeply at what he had made Stanislaus endure, and he would say with great confusion, and he felt what he said, that he was unworthy of such a brother.' The memory of the blows and kicks he had given his brother nerved him to his acts of terrible penance. One night, in 1603, while on a journey, he stayed at the castle of the Loczka family, his friends. After supper he retired to his bedroom, which contained one of those great stoves which travellers in Germany will remember, or which visitors to the South Kensington Museum may see in the Porcelain Gallery. Unseen behind its capacious sides lay in bed Stanislaus Loczka, the child of the master of the house. Little suspecting that he was not alone, Paul spent a large portion of the night in prayer, and then before lying down baring his shoulders, he gave himself a long and terrible discipline, and amidst the blows, weeping bitterly, he kept exclaiming, 'Oh! holy brother, pray God for me a sinner! Holy brother forgive me who have persecuted and beaten you!' The boy saw all, though himself unseen. Many years after, in 1630, before the Ecclesiastical tribunal of Cracow, he gave his evidence as follows: 'I thought that it was a penance he was inflicting on himself for having

murdered his brother; and next morning I asked Paul's servants about it, telling them what I had heard, the strokes, and the cry for pardon to a brother whom he had persecuted and stricken. And they told me that the brother to whom Paul referred was the Blessed Stanislaus, who had entered the Society of Jesus, had died when a youth in Rome, and was then working miracles.'

The well-known spiritual writer, Father Lanciski, wrote from Rome[5] to Paul, then at Prasnitz, to ask for some particulars about St. Stanislaus. His answer, partly in Polish, partly in Latin, is still preserved:

'Very Rev. and Venerable Father and Lord.

'I thank you from my heart for your reverence's goodness and for your prayers, for I was not a little consoled by the favour and the coming of your letter. As you invite me to do you so easy a service, I would wish by all means to grant the decree, the wish, the command of your reverence, all the more because it has to do with a matter not very hard, and which seems as though it would redound to the praise and glory of the Divine Majesty in His blessed servant, who has been sanctified on earth, and not less to the honour of our holy religion, and, I could say besides, to no disgrace of the

[5] Father Lanciski left Rome in 1605 to return to Poland.

Polish name, or of our family. Blessed and glorified be the Name of God in His most merciful goodness, among the sons of men! Still I am not in a position to be able to satisfy the wishes of your reverence in a matter so fair and so easy, and for no other reason than because I cannot lay my hands on that genealogy which tells the exact day of his birth, which is certainly marked down, but which at the time of my writing this letter I cannot find.

'But as I must let you know that I got your letter which you sent me from the holy city of Rome, with the prints of the Blessed, I beg God our Lord to give you a reward for the consolation which you have procured me, and for which I shall ever be grateful. When with the divine help I can find this paper written by the parents of the Blessed, or I ought to say, of our Saint, I shall not fail to let your reverence know the day and the hour of his birth. As to the year I am certain; and I can affirm that I was the first-born, and in August, the early part of the month, 1549; and the Blessed Stanislaus was born in 1550, or little less than a year after me, I do not know whether one month, or two, or three were wanting to complete the twelve. In the paper we possess there is more exact information, if I can only find it. He was therefore the second child, but more prudent and brave than the first-born, or the other

brothers and sisters who followed, and who are all dead many years back, except myself, the first-born; very imprudent in my ways, and slack and weak about my salvation. I pray and beg your reverence to pardon my folly.

'As to what your reverence wants to know about our coming to Vienna, I cannot recollect clearly the year; however I know for certain, and I remember that it was the day after the death of the Emperor Ferdinand, of happy memory, father of Maximilian, and grandfather, if I mistake not, of the present Emperor Rodolf, Archduke of Austria.[6] From this you can readily calculate the exact year of our arrival at Vienna, and at the College, which was afterwards taken away from the Society by the demand of the Austrian nobility. On leaving the College we continued to frequent the classes of the reverend Jesuit Fathers. It is true that our Blessed very willingly used to frequent at that time, not merely the class room but the church; which I used not to do, and for which I now am paying the penalty. Pray forgive reverend Father my long and plain-spoken story. I beg you to give me a share in your prayers in the holy city, and to remember me while I am alive, or when freed from the bonds of my frail body,

[6] Ferdinand died July 25, 1564; Rodolf reigned from 1576 to 1612.

if you chance to hear from others of my death; not for my merits, but out of your kindness. From Prasnitz, July 12, 1606.

'PAUL KOSTKA of Kostkow,

'*Vexillifer* of the territory of Ciechano?.'

Such for forty years was the life of this noble penitent. His fervour, his austerities never relaxed. He became old and decrepit before his time, and was at fifty-eight as feeble as though he had been eighty. Yet he dared to seek admission as a Novice into the Order he had learnt to love so well, that he might become by a double tie the brother of his Stanislaus. He had the greatest veneration for it, and never spoke of it without adding the title of 'holy.' Though unsuccessful in his effort to obtain a permanent house of the Society at Prasnitz, Paul constantly invited the Fathers over to that town to preach to the people, and to aid him by their guidance and spiritual direction. For many years he had felt a strong desire to enter religion, and to complete his holocaust—but a deep feeling of his unworthiness had always hindered his making a formal request to be received. Now when he saw that he was breaking up, he took heart at the thought of his brother, and hoped that out of consideration of his relationship to one who was such a glory to the

Society, he might, in spite of every unfitness, be received. Accordingly he wrote to Father Claudius Aquaviva, who was then General of the Society, begging as a favour, that *jam seniculus*, though a poor old man, he might be permitted to end his days in religion, and, if God so willed, while yet a Novice, like his brother. Father Claudius had not forgotten the days of his own noviceship and the young Stanislaus, to whose virtues he had been so important a witness, so he gladly dispensed with the ordinary impediment of age, and sent word to Father Strinierio, then Provincial of Poland, ordering him to receive the venerable old man without further difficulty. The Provincial let Paul know the good news, bidding him settle his affairs before he entered, and especially to secure for the parish church of Prasnitz the endowment which he had made over to it.

The royal Court then had its sittings at Pietscop, and Paul went there at once. He had scarcely finished his business when he was attacked by fever. Father James Cialezki assisted him, and heard his last confession, for he died after a few days illness. Up to the very last the tears run down his cheeks at the memory of his ill-usage of St. Stanislaus.

The day of his death was November 13, 1607. It was the very day of the month to which in

after years Clement XI. was to transfer the feast of St. Stanislaus. A splendid funeral honoured his remains. All the nobility, the magistrates, and crowds of people flocked to look upon his body, and it was rumoured abroad that a luminous halo was seen around it, and that his face assumed the look of one that was living. They buried him as he had desired, in his chapel at Prasnitz.

Bilinski, the tutor of St. Stanislaus, had his share, as has been seen, in the persecution of our Saint. He too showed the fruit of the Saint's prayers. In after years, on his return to Poland, he took a doctor's degree and was made Canon of Pultowa and Plock, and led a very virtuous life. He never ceased to bewail his behaviour towards Stanislaus, and the side he had taken with his brother against him. Unlike Paul Kostka, he was one of the most valuable witnesses in the Apostolic Processes for the canonization, and from him we learn nearly all we know of Stanislaus' early life. When he began to be honoured as a saint, Bilinski naturally had a great devotion to him, and kept ever before him a picture of the young man. He loved to go over to Kostkow and Prasnitz to see Paul Kostka and talk on pious topics, and to lament together their past faults and folies. When his end drew near he sent for one of the Jesuit Fathers, and made a general confession.

As he entered into his agony, St. Stanislaus appeared to him, filling him with consolation, and with his eyes fixed intently on his portrait, he died in great peace.

CHAPTER XII.

The glorification of St. Stanislaus.

It is well known that the Church makes it a condition, the fulfilment of which she requires before she proceeds to render religious honours to those whom she inserts in her catalogue of the Blessed or of the Saints, that the power of their intercession with God should be proved beyond all reasonable doubt by means of miracles wrought by that intercession after they have passed away from this life. In this case the miraculous favours, which are accorded in consequence of the invocation of the saints, may be considered as tidings which reach us from time to time which attest their existence, their interest in those who ask their help, their charity, their zeal for God's glory, and their power with the Giver of all good gifts and the Lord of all power. The system of the intercessory power of the saints, if we may so speak of it, is a part of the great law of

prayer in the kingdom of God, by means of which it is His will that the spiritual life of the whole body should be exercised and developed, and the several members of which that body is made up be knit together in mutual charity, the foretaste and beginning of that love which is to be their eternal bond in the future ages of heaven.

Without entering further on this large subject, we may observe that no Christian can question the truth that miracles and graces obtained by the invocation of saints, if the facts are once ascertained, belong, in the aspect under which we have regarded them, to the stories of the lives of the saints themselves as well as of the persons who may be benefited by their patronage. They belong, indeed, to a part of the existence of the saints which is in the main hidden from our eyes; they are but passing glimpses of what are the thoughts and affections and occupations of a life which is spent in the clear vision of God, the faculties and operations and joys of which transcend indefinitely all that is most sublime here below, while yet they do not shut off the streams of tenderest sympathy and compassion from flowing down upon the children of the yet militant and suffering Church. Still in this view they have a special interest, and belong, as has been said, to the history of the saints, especially when, as is

sometimes the case, it seems to be the will of God to manifest the honour which He bestows upon His glorified servants in a manner and to an extent which astonishes those who are inclined to measure everything by earthly standards, and make no account of the immense spiritual power and maturity and beauty which may be the adornments of souls whose earthly career has been comparatively short and unseen.

The story of the glorification of St. Stanislaus Kostka is certainly an integral portion of any work, however slight, which aims at representing his life, if it be only that the singular manner in which it has pleased God to honour this holy youth after his death is an indication of the very high graces which lay hidden in that chosen soul before he left this world. At the same time, it would be quite beyond the scope of the present work to give the details of the miracles themselves, or even of a small part of them, on which the decision of the Church was founded. We have already mentioned the instinctive outburst of homage which paid such unusual honours to his body before it was interred, and the way in which he was at once ranked among the special friends of God by the devout novices at Sant' Andrea. The devotion soon spread beyond Rome and Italy, chiefly, as it appears, on account

of the Lives of St. Stanislaus already mentioned, and it took root quickly in his native Poland. Some years later, Claudius Aquaviva, then General of the Society, gave orders that juridical informations should be obtained as to his life and actions from persons still alive who had witnessed them, and in this way there were compiled as many as nineteen short 'Processes,' under the authority of the bishops, in the various places in which his short years had been spent. These documents were summarized and presented, more than thirty years after his death, to the then reigning Pontiff, Clement VIII., who after due consideration and deliberation, issued a Brief (Feb. 18, 1604,) to the city of Pultowa, in which he granted indulgences on the anniversary of the death of Stanislaus, whom he called 'Blessed.' The same Pope had given him the title two years before, in giving leave for the printing of the Life by Samboritano. This was enough to authorize and promote the devotion to St. Stanislaus in his own country, and we shall see that among his most fervent devotees was the King himself. As is often the case, the Fathers of the Society at Rome were very cautious as to allowing further honours to the Saint, lest they might seem to outstrip the patient action of the Holy See in such matters. It was not till 1605 that the picture of St. Stanislaus was placed in the Church of Sant'

Andrea, and votive offerings and lamps were allowed at his tomb. The story of the first public honours that were paid to him as a saint is told by his last biographer. Paul V. was now on the Pontifical throne, Cardinal Montalto was Protector of Poland at Rome, and a certain Provost Opalinski Ambassador for the King. Cardinal Montalto petitioned for leave to render the public honours already mentioned to St. Stanislaus in the Church of Sant' Andrea, and the matter was referred to the Sacred Congregation of Rites. It was summer, and the Cardinals of the Congregation were not likely to meet often for the despatch of business, whereas the anniversary of the death of the 'Beato' was approaching, and there seemed hardly any likelihood that the matter would be settled in time. Opalinski went to the Pope, and begged him to give the required leave without waiting for the report of the Congregation. The Pope did not like to refuse outright, so he asked for a little time to inform himself as to the merits of the case. Opalinski went home to fetch the Briefs in which Clement VIII. had called Stanislaus 'Beato,' and had granted certain indulgences to the church of which the Ambassador was himself the Provost, but before he could get back to the palace the leave was obtained from the Pope by a great Roman lady, Leonora Orsini, Duchess Sforza, cousin

to the Queen of France, who went to His Holiness with the wife of the French Ambassador and a number of Roman ladies, and found him quite ready to grant the favour at once.

The day on which this leave was obtained was the eve of the Assumption, and there was no time to be lost. Opalinski went off at once to Sant' Andrea with a company of Polish nobles who were in Rome, took the picture of St. Stanislaus out of the sacristy into the church, hung it up with a collection of votive offerings and lit a number of candles before it, as well as a silver lamp sent by the Bishop of Cracow,[1] who had been the companion of Stanislaus in the College at Vienna. The good Provost and his friends then flung themselves on the ground, and prayed, with many tears and much spiritual joy, to their beatified countryman. The church was at once sumptuously decorated for the morrow. Mgr. Opalinski sang Mass with great solemnity. And, as there had been so little time for the news of the now permitted honours to spread over Rome, Opalinski obtained leave to repeat the celebration a week later, when the decorations were increased and solemn Mass and Vespers sung in the presence of a large concourse of people, among whom were many Cardinals and ambassadors, as well as Polish and Roman princes.

[1] Card. Bernard Maciejowski.

The news of the honours paid to Stanislaus in Rome soon reached Poland, and aroused there a fresh and strong desire to see him solemnly canonized. The favours and graces which had been obtained by his intercession were already very great, and we find that after a few years the King, Sigismund III., nominated a special agent in Rome, Father Virgilio Cepari, to press on the canonization, and also to obtain from the Holy See the enrolment of Stanislaus among the titular patrons of the kingdom. The letters of the King were accompanied by other letters from the Queen, Prince Ladislaus, and almost all the Polish Bishops, as well as a large number of nobles, begging from the Holy See the canonization. The matter was again formally remitted to the Congregation of Rites, and in 1619 all the preliminaries had been gone through, and the orders issued for the formation of what was called the Apostolical Process, as distinguished from those made by the authority of the bishops.

Two years later than this an event happened which wonderfully increased the devotion to St. Stanislaus in his native country, and deserves special mention in any account of his *cultus*. It is certainly a remarkable thing that we have already had to mention the petition made on the part of Sigismund III., that the young Saint should be solemnly

enrolled among the patrons of his native country, and the fact speaks eloquently as to the number of graces and favours which must have been won in Poland by means of his intercession. Such a development of devotion could hardly have taken place save among a people which was thoroughly Catholic, perhaps we may add, in a country in some respects on the frontier of Christendom, and exposed to continual danger from and conflict with the enemies of the Faith. Yet we find that fifty years after his death, Stanislaus was not only a popular Saint with large numbers of his countrymen, his feast already celebrated with singular pomp and large gatherings of people, but that the Sovereign himself was convinced of his power with God to such an extent as to look to him for aid and protection in the danger to which Poland was exposed. At the time of which we speak, the Poles had suffered a great defeat from the Turkish army. They had sent fifty thousand men to help Gaspar Gratiani, Woiwode of Moldavia, to defend himself against the vengeance of the Sultan, Osman II., who had discovered his dealings with Sigismund, and sent an army to depose him. The Poles were disastrously defeated and cut to pieces by Iskander Pasha near Jascy, and Gratiani had lost his life. Osman now determined to attempt the conquest of Poland itself,

and left Constantinople, early in 1621, at the head of a large army, the numbers of which are variously stated by different writers at one million, four hundred thousand, or one hundred thousand men. The army did not arrive on the Dniester till the beginning of autumn, and found nothing to oppose it but forty thousand Poles, with eight thousand auxiliaries, sent by the Emperor from Germany. Another army of eighty thousand men lay at Kamineck. The battle or battles which ensued have taken the name of Choczin, from the place at which the Polish camp, which was furiously assailed by Osman, was pitched and fortified. The issue seemed at first doubtful and the Polish general lost his life, but at length the Turks were disgracefully and entirely routed with very great slaughter, and Osman returned to Constantinople to fall a victim, the next year, to a revolt of the Janissaries whom he had intended to exterminate. The salvation of Poland—for it was nothing else—which had been wrought in this campaign, was attributed by Sigismund to the intercession of St. Stanislaus. The King had great faith in the power of his intercession, and he had sent a special request to Rome that the relic of the head of the Saint, which, as has been mentioned, was preserved in the private chapel of the novices at Sant' Andrea, might be sent to him. His envoy, the Bishop of Luck,

Acacius Grockoroski, was sent from Rome bearing the head of St. Stanislaus in a precious reliquary, and it was found that the very day on which the Bishop crossed the Polish frontier with his sacred charge, was the day of the final and utter defeat of the Turks at Kamineck. Other marvellous occurrences attested the part which St. Stanislaus had taken in behalf of his country. Nicolas Oborski, a Father of the Society, whose name has already been mentioned in connection with evidence concerning the life and virtues of St. Stanislaus, was at Caliz, in Poland, the night before the battle. He dreamed that he saw our Blessed Lady with her Divine Child in her arms, seated in a starry chariot which seemed to pass along a path of light from west to east. By her side was a young man in earnest prayer, who from time to time seemed to be pointing out to her attention something that was going on far below. Oborski easily recognized in the praying youth the lately beatified Stanislaus Kostka, while on turning his gaze in the direction to which the supplicant pointed, his eyes moist with tears, he beheld the two armies engaged in furious conflict, and saw that they were the Poles and the Turks, and that the blessed youth was imploring our Lord and His Blessed Mother to grant the victory to the Christians. After a few days, news came of the great victory which had been

gained at Choczin, a hundred leagues off, and it was found that the time of the vision had coincided with the moment at which the scale of battle turned decidedly against the Turks. It appears that other persons also had similar visions, and more than one church in Poland is named as having had the particulars of this marvellous deliverance painted on their walls. Sigismund himself attributed the victory to the Saint, whose head he had inclosed in a golden bust adorned with valuable gems, and placed in the royal chapel at Warsaw, whence it was yearly carried in procession, on the anniversary of St. Stanislaus' death, to the church of the Jesuit fathers, where it was exposed for veneration.

This was not the only famous occasion on which Poland seemed to owe her deliverance to the prayers of her Blessed child. The great victory of Sobieski over the Turks near Leopol, in 1676, was attributed by him and his consort, Mary Casimir, to the intercession of the Saint, to whom many prayers were made at the time of the battle, the issue of which was decided in great measure by an extraordinary storm of hail and snow (it was on the 24th of August) which drove right in the faces of the Turks, who were far more numerous than their opponents, and who were completely disconcerted and thrown into disorder by the suddenness and violence of the tempest.

It is remarkable also that we find among the accounts of the miracles of St. Stanislaus a number of deliverances of cities and towns from the plague, which ravaged Poland for a considerable number of years in the early half of the seventeenth century. But it would be foreign to the purpose of the present work to go into detail upon the miracles of the Saint. It is enough to have drawn attention to the singular providence by which a youth who left his country when fourteen years of age, and who died in a humble and retired novitiate at Rome in his eighteenth year, came to be so universally venerated in his native land, and to exert his power in heaven so efficaciously for the deliverance of that native land from the Turkish yoke on more than one occasion, as to have been selected both by the King and the Holy See as a special Patron Saint of his country.

There are some singular circumstances in connection with this declaration. The petition which was made in the name of the King of Poland for the declaration of St. Stanislaus as Patron of the realm was at first rejected at Rome, on the ground that he had as yet been only beatified, whereas the title of Patron was by a special decree of the Congregation of Rites in 1630, reserved for canonized saints. This refusal, however, only served to stimulate still more strongly the zeal of the Poles for the honour of their youthful

Saint, a zeal which was fostered and rewarded by the numberless graces which were continually obtained by his intercession. Accordingly prayers and petitions were reiterated, and it was represented to the Holy See that as St. Stanislaus was so continually showing himself, by the miracles which he wrought, to be a true Patron to his native country, it could not be unsafe or premature that he should be declared to be such by the Church. The Pope at last yielded, and it is remarkable, again, that the decree in which Clement X. made the required declaration, and set aside for the nonce the decree of the Congregation of 1630, is dated in the January of the year which witnessed the election of John Sobieski to the Polish crown, rather more than two years before the victory gained by that sovereign at Leopol, as has already been said.

Instead of entering any further on the beautiful details of the miracles of St. Stanislaus, we may conclude this part of our subject by an evidence of his power in a different sphere from that in which those miracles of a Saint which meet the public eye are usually found. A letter exists in the handwriting of the famous ascetical writer, Father Nicolas Lanciski (or Lancisius), who has been already mentioned as having sought from Paul Kostka all the information which he could furnish with regard to his

blessed brother, in which the writer attests the marvellous spiritual benefits which he has himself derived from his devotion to St. Stanislaus, a devotion which he carried out by endeavouring in every possible way to promote the honour of his heavenly patron. The letter is written in the most absolute confidence, and contains at the end a prayer to the Superior to whom it was addressed (probably about the beginning of the seventeenth century) to destroy it that no one may see it but himself. It must therefore be considered as almost under the seal of confession, a circumstance which will account for the entire simplicity and freedom with which Father Lanciski speaks of the effects in his own soul which he attributes to the intercession of the Saint.

A letter from the Venerable Father Nicolas Lanciski, S.J., to the Rev. Father Peter Spinelli, S.J., Provincial of Naples, on Devotion to St. Stanislaus Kostka.

'I have determined to write to your Reverence (it being less painful to write than to speak of one's self) in order to induce you to recommend most earnestly to your novices devotion to the Blessed Stanislaus. I am convinced that it is through him I have received the priceless graces which God has vouchsafed to me, and which are increasing daily. As it would be impossible, however, to enumerate all the Divine

favours which I owe to his intercession, I will confine myself to a few. The first is, that God has bestowed upon me a constant and generous fervour of will, so that I feel at all times unalterably resolved, not only to live as a religious should, free from the stain of even lesser venial sins, but also to choose in all things what I consider the most perfect. Perfection itself I measure by the degree of it which the most illustrious saints attained during their lives on earth —such as St. Francis, St. Bernard, and those like to them in holiness.

'Secondly, I am so careful in the observance of our rules, even those which might be infringed without any moral fault, that if I were to live among the Turks, alone and removed from the eyes of all men, I should still, through the zeal and fervent good will with which God has gifted me, observe all our ordinances, down to the very least, with scrupulous care, just as if my Superiors, or any other witness of my conduct, were actually present.

'Thirdly, I so dearly love the Cross—I so long for it, and so earnestly implore it, of the Lord our God, that there is no evil which I am not ready to endure for His sake; and thus, taking advantage of many singular occasions which offered, I have—strengthened by aid from above—borne cheerfully crosses and humiliations which were

not a little trying to nature. I have read in the lives of certain holy men, that they endeavoured to lighten the burthen of trials and humiliations; but, for myself, I have never felt any repugnance on the part of my will, and I have ever experienced, in all my sufferings, a certain interior consolation most delightful to the soul.

Fourthly, I am overwhelmed with profound grief when I think of the sins into which men daily fall, or when I hear that anything savouring of a worldly spirit has been said or done by any of ours—so much so, that were I to rest upon the thought, I should faint; for my bodily strength gives way, and the pain I feel exceeds the agony of a mortal wound.

'Fifthly, I can recollect myself at pleasure, and fix my thoughts in prayer; and I find it easy to pass even from the most distracting occupations to familiar intercourse with God, in the closest possible union. Nay, even when engaged in duties which are most apt to divert one's attention—such as passing through the city or serving at table—I can both pray interiorly and go well through the outward employment.

'Sixthly, I am consumed with a burning desire of attaining the highest sanctity, and I am conscious that this desire does not spring from any ambition to raise myself above others, for, through the goodness of God, the allurements of vain-glory cause me

no trouble; and whenever I undertake a work which may flatter vanity, I feel no sentiment whatever but the desire to act purely and entirely for God, from the "love of benevolence," as it is called, but never from the "love of concupiscence."

'Seventhly, If at any time, from being occupied with affairs of moment, my mind should wander from the thought of God, the instant I am disengaged He presents Himself to me, and I am borne to commune with Him in my soul by a propensity so strong that it seems a part of my very nature. And indeed it would be difficult, if not impossible for me, when such duties are discharged, not to feel at once occupied with God and the things of God.

'After all this, your Reverence will not be surprised to find me so anxious to promote devotion to the Blessed Stanislaus. Not many years ago I made a compact with him, that he, in heaven, should see to my sanctification, whilst I undertook to work for his honour upon earth. His part of the contract has been faithfully fulfilled; but, doubtless from my sins, my labours have not been crowned with a like success, for I can find no one to be my helper. I now promise, with full confidence, that he who exerts himself to promote the honour of Blessed Stanislaus will soon experience an evident increase of virtue and perfection, and that his reward will be ample

in proportion to the earnestness of his efforts. It is in straining every nerve and employing every means to further his glory that devotion to Blessed Stanislaus essentially consists; for he who merely seeks favours from him shows himself more mindful of his own interests than zealous for the interests of the Saint; in the same manner that a person who, every time he goes to court, presents petitions for favours, proves himself to be solicitous rather for his own advantage than loyal and devoted to his prince. Nor do I now insist on that form of devotion towards the Saint which consists in an imitation of his virtues; for in this, although we do not lose sight of his honour, yet we are chiefly intent upon our own spiritual profit. In my opinion, the man who labours with all the energy of his soul, and through pure love for God, to procure for a Saint the veneration of others, takes the best means of honouring the Saint, and also of securing his own spiritual advantage; for this seems to me the shortest and easiest road to a perfect imitation, for two reasons: first, we shall secure more readily the good will of the Saint, when we seek chiefly his glory, not our own advantage; secondly, our very zeal in furthering the glory of the Saint is itself a strong inducement to imitate him; for as it is the sanctity of the Saints which urges us on to promote their

glory, the desire of sanctity must necessarily grow within us whilst we are labouring, though esteem of it, to secure for any Saint, whether canonized or beatified, the honour and veneration to which he is entitled.

'Therefore, I earnestly beseech your Reverence to impress this devotion on your novices in the way I have suggested, unless you do not approve of it. I venture to promise a most certain progress in perfection to any one who, zealously, and looking to the glory of God, strives to advance the honour of Blessed Stanislaus; and I am as firmly persuaded that such will be the result as if it had actually taken place.

'I have thought fit to write to your Reverence with great candour, as you are my father, to whom my soul should be as well known as it is to myself; and also to show you that in endeavouring to increase devotion to Blessed Stanislaus, I am urged on not by indiscreet zeal, but rather by a desire of complying with a very serious duty. May the Lord Jesus Christ be in your heart and upon your lips, that you may light up in the hearts of our brothers the flame of love for their Blessed Brother whom God so wonderfully loved on earth, and whom He now delights to honour in heaven. Amen.'

Here follows the date of the letter, after which the writer adds: 'Your Reverence will, for charity's sake, tear this letter in pieces, so that the smallest

fragment of it may not be read by any one but yourself. I might record other favours received by me which are, perhaps—nay, which are beyond question—greater than any to which I have alluded; but I do not wish to be troublesome to your Reverence, more especially as I consider that I have said enough to attain my object.'

We may conclude this chapter with the detail of the further progress of the solemn glorification of St. Stanislaus, according to the custom of the Church. We have already mentioned the Briefs of 1602 and 1604, in which the Pope of the day gave to Stanislaus the title of Blessed; and the allowance of public honours to him in Rome as well as in Poland in 1601. The year 1619 witnessed the issuing of the orders for the Apostolic process, which took two or three years to complete. This was not long before the decrees of Urban VIII., which exacted new and stricter conditions than before with regard to beatification and canonization. New processes had to be formed, and it was not till 1659 that it was declared that the case of St. Stanislaus was one of those excepted from the effect of the decrees of Urban VIII., in consideration of his *cultus* which had already been allowed by the Holy See before these decrees were made. In 1670, Clement X.

allowed the Office and Mass of Blessed Stanislaus to be recited on the 13th of November in Poland, Lithuania, and in the churches of the Society of Jesus. It was on that day that the body of St. Stanislaus was transferred from the old Church of Sant' Andrea to the new and most exquisite church, the work of Bernini in his old age, which was built on the Quirinal, adjoining the novitiate, by Camillo Pamphili, nephew of Innocent X. It was in 1671 that Clement X. further declared Stanislaus one of the principal Patrons of the kingdom of Poland, and in 1714, after the usual examination of miracles by the Sacred Congregation, Clement XI. decreed his solemn canonization. The actual ceremony, however, was still delayed from various causes, until at last at the end of the year 1726, Benedict XIII. celebrated the function in the Basilica of St. Peter, adding a peculiar and touching lustre to the glory of St. Stanislaus, by associating with him in the same honours the other and perhaps still more famous Saint of the Society, to whom he bears so strong a likeness—the angelic St. Aloysius. It is said that among all the confessors who have been canonized by the Holy See, no one has died at so early an age as St. Stanislaus Kostka.

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